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MYTHS OF THE ODYSSEY

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MYTHS

OF

THE ODYSSEY

IN

ART AND LITERATURE

BY

J. E. HARRISON

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TO THE

MEMORY OF MY GREEK FRIEND

J. B.

I DEDICATE ALL THAT IN THIS BOOK IS WRITTEN ARIGHT.

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PREFACE

For English readers my book is in intention somewhat novel; it may be well therefore at the outset clearly to define its purport.

By two voices the tales of Homer have been told us: to one of these we too often neglect to listen. Because the myths of Homer himself are told in words that are matchless, is it well that the story which art has left us should remain unread? The vase-painter and the gem-engraver are indeed humbler artists than the great epic poet; sometimes they are mere craftsmen, and their work little beyond the rudest symbolic word-painting; but they are Greeks, and they may help us to understand somewhat better the spirit of their mighty kinsman. We who are so far removed, by time, by place, by every condition of modern life, must refuse no aid whereby we may seek to draw the nearer: our eyes must learn to see as well as our ears to hearken.

We read enough of the writings of scholiast and grammarian, who have striven in all ages to elucidate the text of Homer. Thereby we acquire, it is true,

ch verbal intelligence of our poet, but perhaps attain to but little additional sympathy. There is another commentary which by all but professed archæologists remains for the most part unknown, the commentary of Art, of Mythography.

It is this unread commentary of Art which I have tried in the simplest fashion to lay before my readers, side by side with the literary form it at once embodies and elucidates.

It will be obvious that, in attempting this *juxtaposition* of Mythology and Mythography, while we gain much, I hope, in suggestiveness of treatment, we must be content to lose something of separate completeness. Had my object been purely artistic, I should have treated of the art monuments of each myth in chronological sequence, and thereby have obtained a view at once more systematic, and, from the artistic standpoint, more instructive. But this gain would have been won at the expense of marring and mutilating the Homeric form of the myth. Because this form is of paramount beauty I have thought fit to maintain it at all costs. I must therefore ask my readers to bear constantly in mind that the order of the art monuments is purposely *not* chronological. Each vase or gem or wall-painting is introduced at the moment when it is needed to form a comment on the Homeric myth, or on some later, significant variation.

It may be asked, What is the precise advantage of this juxtaposition of Mythology and Mythography? Does it result in more than an old-world picture-book, more quaint perhaps, but less lovely, and no more significant, than the drawings of Flaxman? The answer to these questions may be formally stated at the outset, but will, I hope, be better realised at the close of my work. We shall see again and again that the ancient artist was no *illustrator* in the modern sense of the term. The words of Homer may or may not have sounded in his ears as he wrought: the text of the last edition of the poet's works was certainly not before his eyes. Frequently we have plain evidence that it is not the artist who is borrowing from Homer, but that both Homer and the artist drew their inspiration from one common source, local and national tradition. Nothing perhaps makes us realise so vividly that the epics of Homer are embodiments, not creations, of national Sagas, as this free and variant treatment of his mythology by the artist. Homer's influence may have been on the whole predominant, but the vase-painter of the fifth and fourth century B.C. was also familiar with the works of the so-called Cyclic poets, with the Cypria, the Aithiopis, the Iliou-persis, the Lesser Iliad, the Nostoi, the Telegonia, and no doubt a host of others whose very names are lost to tradition.

Even where the vase-painter or the gem-engraver

viously draws his inspiration from Homer, still, in early days, he is no illustrator; the servile spirit of the copyist was of late growth. What the work of an artist contemporary with Homer might have been, we cannot surely say. So far as we at present know, no monument which adequately represents the art of Homer's days is left us. His gods and heroes were reputed to be skilled craftsmen; so much we learn from the goodly devices of sculptured shield, and carven couch and gilded baldric that they wrought. But works such as these we can only contemplate through the haze of poetic splendour the poet has cast about them, and by inference and dim conjecture alone do we recover some faint shadow of their semblance.

The earliest art monuments we shall have to study are as late, for the most part, as three or four centuries after Homer's days. They range roughly between the dates B.C. 500—A.D. 300. Now it is obvious that, in the lapse of eight centuries, Homer and his mythology must have been viewed through very various mediums of thought and emotion. His verses are indeed a κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ, but men hold their heritage by every variety of tenure. It has been justly said that "of Homer there can be no final translation." If this be true of the poet's language, it is equally true that of his thought there can be no final rendering into plastic or pictorial form. To

each artist, as to each translator, it is given, in proportion to his insight and in accordance with the medium he employs, to seize and fix for himself and his contemporaries some aspect of the poet's meaning. As the translator is conditioned by the idiom of his language and by the taste or feeling of his age, so the artist is conditioned by the limits of the surface on which he works, by its texture, by the traditions of his school, by the social and religious atmosphere which surrounds him. The archaic vase-painter and the Roman wall-decorator may both give utterance to Homer's thought; but a whole gamut of tones and semi-tones, emotional and intellectual, has been sounded in the interval, and our ears note the transition.

We shall find in our latest monuments—those of the Græco-Roman or Roman periods—the closest and most faithful *illustrations* of Homer: when creative power is on the wane, art can only plagiarise. For this very reason an archaic design, however rough and even clumsy its execution, is usually far more fruitful in suggestion, because more independent, more vigorous, than the finished but lifeless work of later days.

It will be sufficiently evident, I think, even from these few words, that the juxtaposition of ancient art and literature is no barren task; rather its fruits are so diverse, so manifold, the fear is we fail to gather in

the full harvest. Adequately to appreciate the significance of any single vase-picture, we need to know the time, the place of its painting, and to realise every influence—local, religious, artistic—which could act upon its painter. Such a knowledge must extend not only over well-trodden ground, but far into obscure corners of Greek history, geography, and mythology. A very few of the tracks through this unknown land I have tried to indicate.

Purposely I have refrained from dealing, except quite incidentally, with questions of comparative mythology; partly because the express object of my work forbade my treating of the several myths in their purely *literary* form, but chiefly because I believe the materials for such treatment to be at present incomplete.

May I add one word as to the end I hope to attain? I believe the educational value of a study of archæology to consist far more in the discipline of taste and feeling it affords, than in the gain of definite information it has to offer. Greek art does it is true, occasionally elucidate obscure passages in Greek literature; but such verbal intelligence is but the small coin she deals out to the hirelings who clamour for payment, not the treasure she lays up as guerdon for her true servants. Such verbal intelligence may be gained in a moment and lightly passed from hand to hand; but the best gifts of archæology

-the trained eye, quick instinct, pure taste, well-
lanced emotion,—these we may be thankful if we
in in a lifetime; and each man must strive to attain
em for himself.

This brings me to the means. The pictures I
fer are themselves but the shadows, more or less
ithful, of other pictures. Where we can look at the
iginal, no copy must suffice us. Some of these
iginals are in our own Museum. These we are
ound to study. Where the original is in a foreign
useum beyond our reach, we can at least familiarise
rselves with analogous designs of the same style
d period. We can learn to know what manner of
ing an Etruscan sarcophagos is, or a Pompeian
all-painting, how a coin or a vase or a gem of the
th century B.C. differs from one of the fourth or
ird. A very few hours will serve to make the dead
ctures of a book a living reality; but I repeat again,
d can scarcely repeat too often, the training of taste,
hich is the essential condition of close sympathy
ith Greek feeling, whether in art or literature, can
ly come to us by constant looking, by a slow and
ng-protracted process of habituation, by the exercise
a spirit rather receptive than critical. To such a
rocess it is my highest hope that this book may
rve as an initiation.

I add one caution, necessary perhaps to the un-
ary. The pictures I offer must be regarded as the

only certain facts: the explanations put forth partak necessarily of the nature of theory. And in th young science of archæology the theory of to-day ma be contradicted by the new discovery of to-morrow I would have every student remember that, eve where no doubt is expressed, it is his part to exercis a wise scepticism, to judge for himself of the pro babilities of each interpretation.

The pleasant task remains to me of acknowledgin my many debts.

In quoting passages from Homer I have use throughout the translation of Mr. S. H. Butcher an Mr. A. Lang, and my introductory note is abstracte from the preface to their second edition. Whe lack of space has obliged me to condense instead quoting Homer's story, I have not scrupled to us their phraseology. Passages of Theokritus are fro the prose version of Mr. A. Lang.

A tolerably complete list of the foreign autho ties consulted will be found in the Appendix.

To many of these my attention was drawn by th kindness of Dr. W. Klein of Vienna, who, during h stay in England, frequently afforded me valuab assistance. Should this meet his eye I trust he w allow my thanks.

To Mr. C. T. Newton, of the British Museum, wish here to record my gratitude for constant facil

s accorded to me for study in the Classical Anti-ities Departments of the British Museum, and also his great kindness in undertaking the revision of proof-sheets.

My very special thanks are due to Mr. R. S. Poole, the British Museum, who throughout my work has lped me with unwearied kindness, and to whom owe many more suggestions than can be acknow-lged by direct quotation.

For suggestions kindly made to me in the earlier ages of my book, and for the revision of a portion my MS., I am indebted to Mr. A. Sidgwick of orpus Christi College, Oxford.

Last, but also first and foremost, my thanks as a upil are offered to Mr. S. H. Butcher, of University ollege, Oxford, but for whose past teaching, as well present help, my work would never have been ttempted.

J. E. H.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

ODYSSEUS, some ten years after the sack of Troy, reaches in his wanderings the court of Alkinoos, king of the Phæaians. There, to the king and queen and the assembled chiefs, he tells the story of his mishaps and strange wayfaring. It is to this story (Ἀλκινόου ἀπόλογος) that the myths selected exclusively belong. Odysseus tells how, after leaving Troy he reaches Malea, and thence is driven ten days by the ruinous winds. Henceforth he sails beyond the limits of geography. He comes to the coast of the Lotophagi, then to the land of the *Cyclôpes,* thence to the floating island of Æolus, to the pirate *Læstrygones,* and to the Æaea, the home of *Circe.* Here there is a pause in his labours; he abides with Circe a year long, then, at her bidding, accomplishes his descent into *Hades,* whence he returns to her for a while. She foretells the remaining perils, and he starts again on his homeward journey. He passes the *Sirens* and *Scylla,* and reaches the isle of Thrinakia. There his comrades slay the kine of Helios. When they embark again a storm is sent by Poseidon in vengeance. All his comrades perish; Odysseus only escapes. He

retraces his journey as far as Scylla and Charybdis, escapes from *Charybdis*, and lands at last alone on the island of Calypso. There he stays eight years, and thence he sails to the land of the Phæakians, where, as we have seen, the story is told. From this story three episodes have been necessarily omitted—*i.e.* the adventures with the Lotophagi and with Æolus, and the sojourn in Thrinakia, in each case because of their slight or doubtful representation in ancient art. The remaining myths are treated in order.

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J. E. H.

MYTHS OF THE ODYSSEY

I

THE MYTH OF THE CYCLOPES

Homeric scholars and comparative mythologists tell us that the stories with which the Odyssey is thick-strewn were not invented by Homer; that he took the folk-lore that lay ready to hand, and wove its diverse legends into an epic whole; that many of his myths are the common property of both Aryan and non-Aryan peoples. When we come to the story of the Cyclopes we welcome this view. The tale is essentially an ugly one; we are glad that Homer did not invent it; force is too brutal, cunning too childish; the craft and daring of the godlike Odysseus is changed into reckless folly and shallow deceit, such as we think even Athene could scarcely have approved in her well-loved hero. All the more interesting it is to see how the Greek poets dealt with material so shapeless and witless, and how Greek artists toned down by degrees its harsh outlines to even excessive softness.

Later on we must notice shortly how the one-eyed giant story fared in other lands, but first we will make detailed acquaintance with the Greek Polyphemus. The story should

be read in full, but its length forces us to confine quotation to such parts as bear directly on our immediate purpose.

Sore against their will Odysseus has dragged away his comrades from the land of the Lotus-eaters,[1] and "bound them, weeping, beneath the benches in the hollow barks." From their soft forgetfulness there was to be full soon a rude awakening; the horrors of the cave of Polyphemus must have come with double harshness upon the men who had tasted of the honey-sweet fruit.

And they came "to the land of the Cyclopes, a froward and a lawless folk, who, trusting to the deathless gods, plant not aught with their hands, neither plough; but, behold, all these things spring for them in plenty, unsown and untilled; wheat, and barley, and vines, which bear great clusters of the juice of the grape, and the rain of Zeus gives them increase. These have neither gatherings for counsel nor oracles of law, but they dwell in hollow caves on the high hills, and each one utters the law to his children and his wives, and they reck not one of another."

For a night the whole company abide on a waste isle stretching without the harbour of the land of the Cyclopes; but in the early dawn, Odysseus, with his own ship's company alone, rows across the fair haven to the mainland of the Cyclopes.

"Now, when we had come to the land that lies hard by, we saw a cave on the border near to the sea, lofty, and roofed over with laurels, and there many flocks of sheep and goats were used to rest. And about it a high outer court was built with stones, deep bedded, and with tall pines and oaks with their high crown of leaves. And a man was wont

[1] Od. ix. 98.

sleep therein, of monstrous size, who shepherded his ocks alone and afar, and was not conversant with others, ut dwelt apart in lawlessness of mind. Yea, for he was a onstrous thing, and fashioned marvellously; nor was he ke to any man that lives by bread, but like a wooded peak the towering hills, which stands out apart and alone om others."

Here, again, Odysseus leaves part of his well-loved company to guard the ship, and takes with him twelve only—nd they the best; most important of all, he bears a goatskin dark wine and sweet, which Maron, the priest of Apollo, ad given him as guerdon for reverent protection.

They come to the cave of the Cyclops, but he is abroad epherding his flocks. His comrades beseech Odysseus take of the cheeses that lie piled in baskets, and drive off e kids and lambs; the foolhardy hero will not hearken, ut abides to tempt his fate. At supper-time the giant mes home bearing a grievous weight of wood for kindling; e drives in his fat flocks, and sets against the cave mouth is doorstone, a mighty, sheer rock. When his milking is one he espies the strangers, and asks them of their business. And Odysseus, though his heart is broken within im for terror of the monstrous shape and voice, makes nswer that they are wandering suppliants, and "come to ese thy knees, if perchance thou wilt give us a stranger's ft, or make any present, as is the due of strangers. Nay, rd, have regard to the gods, for we are thy suppliants nd Zeus is the avenger of suppliants and sojourners."

But the Cyclops answers out of his pitiless heart, Thou art witless, my stranger, or thou hast come from far, who biddest me either to fear or shun the gods. For

the Cyclopes pay no heed to Zeus, lord of the ægis, nor to the blessed gods, for verily we are better men than they. Nor would I, to shun the enmity of Zeus, spare either thee or thy company, unless my spirit bade me."

His spirit does not bid him that night, for straightway he seizes two of the comrades of Odysseus, and slays them for his horrid meal, and when he has filled his huge maw and thereafter drunk pure milk, he falls asleep on the floor of the cave. Next day two more perish as victims for the midday meal, and with a loud whoop the Cyclops sets out with his flocks for the hills.

Odysseus takes counsel in his heart and bethinks him of the huge club of the Cyclops, like in size to the mast of a dark ship of twenty oars. From it he cuts off a fathom length and sharpens it to a point, and hardens it in the fire. They cast lots, and upon four of the bravest the lot falls to bore out the eye of the giant, and Odysseus is fifth. Again, at eventide, the giant comes home, and this time drives in his whole flock, males and females, "whether through some foreboding, or perchance the god so bade him do." When the milking is done he seizes other two of the companions, and makes ready for supper. "Then, verily, I stood by the Cyclops and spake to him, holding in my hands an ivy bowl of the dark wine.

"'Cyclops, take and drink wine after thy feast of man's meat, that thou mayest know what manner of drink this was that our ship held. And lo! I was bringing it thee as a drink-offering, if haply thou mayest take pity and send me on my way home, but thy mad rage is past all sufferance. O hard of heart! how may another of the many men there be come ever to thee again, seeing that thy deeds have been lawless?'

"So I spake; and he took the cup and drank it off, and found great delight in drinking the sweet draught, and asked me for it yet a second time.

"'Give it me again of thy grace, and tell me thy name straightway, that I may give thee a stranger's gifts, wherein thou mayest be glad. Yea, for the earth, the grain-giver, bears for the Cyclopes the mighty clusters of the juice of the grape, and the rain of Zeus gives them increase, but this is a rill of very nectar and ambrosia.'

"So he spake, and again I handed him the dark wine. Thrice I bare and gave it him, and thrice in his folly he drank it to the lees. Now, when the wine had got about the wits of the Cyclops, then did I speak to him with soft words:

"'Cyclops, thou askest me my renowned name, and I will declare it unto thee, and do thou grant me a stranger's gift, as thou didst promise. No-man is my name, and No-man they call me, my father and my mother, and all my fellows.'

"So I spake, and straightway he answered me out of his pitiless heart:

"'No-man will I eat last in the number of his fellows, and the others before him—that shall be thy gift.'"

This scene, Odysseus offering the cup, is a favourite one for presentation by Greek artists. It afforded scope for skilful grouping and posture, and there needed only some hint of horrors past and to come to make the picture dramatic and yet not disgusting. To a *Roman* artist belongs the shame of depicting with horrid accuracy the actual banquet, and a Roman poet[1] delighted to describe it. But Greek vase and Etruscan sarcophagus are alike free from this revolting realism.

[1] Ovid.

Our first design (Plate 1) is from a bas-relief in the museum at Volterræ, executed evidently in the best style of this kind of work. The monument is fortunately very well preserved, so that the motive and expression of nearly all the figures is unusually clear.

In the centre of the group is Polyphemus, seated at the entrance of his cave. With the left foot he tramples on one of the comrades of Odysseus, whom he prepares to devour. This is the only indication of the banquet. He lifts his right hand towards Odysseus, who approaches, offering in both his hands the cup of wine. This cup is not the one-handled kissubion, which we shall notice in another and earlier monument. Odysseus wears the cuirass and chlamys and sailor's cap.[1] This is his usual dress in late art; in archaic and even middle period designs he appears naked but for the chlamys, and with his head bare or wearing a helmet.

The attitude of Polyphemus and that of the fallen comrade should be carefully noted. Similar grouping occurs in many other monuments, marble statues, gems, reliefs; in fact, so frequently do we find it that we are driven to suppose that all these various yet analogous designs are replicas of the motive of some great original group, so famous and admired as to be widely reproduced. We give only one of these designs, our frieze in Plate 1, because the numerous variations have no fresh interest or significance, but the fact of their existence is noteworthy.

[1] This cap becomes a note of time. Pliny tells us that Nicomachus was the first to depict Odysseus wearing it. If this statement is correct it helps to fix the approximate date of many monuments. Nicomachus lived about the early part of the fourth century B.C. Certainly in vases of the archaic period Odysseus usually appears bareheaded or with the casque; on gems and Roman bas-reliefs, with the pilos.

Pl. 1

To return to our description of the relief. On the opposite side to Odysseus are three of his companions, preparing, it seems, for flight, in accordance with the scheme of their leader. One seems to have slipped down beneath the ram, as if ready to grasp its wool; or possibly this figure may be Odysseus himself, as he appears in the scene immediately to follow; the other caresses the creature's head, probably to quiet him, so that he may not distract the attention of the Cyclops. The motive of the third companion is obscure: he seems to be inciting the Cyclops to drink, or cheering on Odysseus. The whole composition is very brightly conceived and almost crowded with action. This confusion of many scenes and consecutive moments into one, we must be prepared constantly to find. Art has only one tense—the present.

We must pass to the central act.

"Therewith he sank backwards and fell with face upturned, and there he lay with his great neck bent round; and sleep, that conquers all men, overcame him. Then I thrust in that stake under the deep ashes, until it should grow hot, and I spake to my companions comfortable words, lest any should hang back from me in fear. But when that bar of olive wood was just about to catch fire in the flame, green though it was, and began to glow terribly, even then I came nigh and drew it from the coals, and my fellows gathered about me, and some god breathed great courage into us. For their part they seized the bar of olive wood, that was sharpened at the point, and thrust it into his eye, while I from my place aloft turned it about, as when a man bores a ship's plank with an auger, while his fellows below spin it with a strap, which they hold at either end, and the

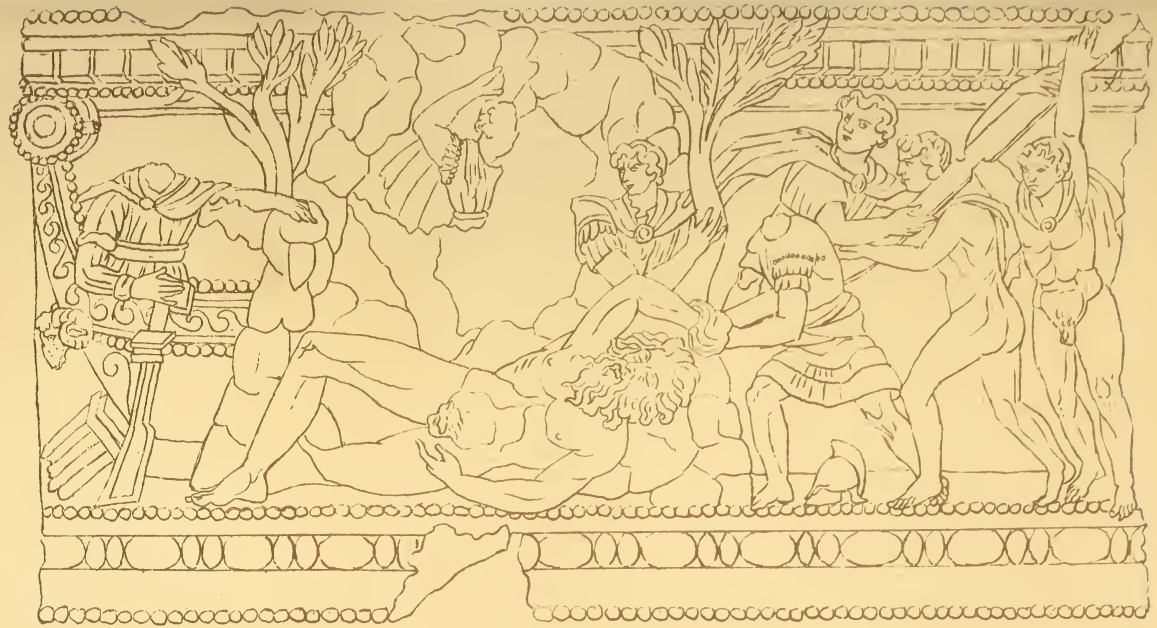
auger runs round continually. Even so did we seize the fiery-pointed brand and whirled it round in his eye, and the blood flowed about the heated bar."

Exactly this central moment has been seized for presentation by the artist of a second Etruscan sarcophagus at Volterræ (figured in Plate 2). This relief is as well executed as the first, but unfortunately is much mutilated. Polyphemus lies outstretched in the floor of his cave, drunk and asleep. He is of monstrous bulk, his brow is rough, his beard long and bristly. He has distinctly two eyes. We may note once for all that, so far as at present known, the Cyclops has two eyes in all art monuments until we come to Roman times;[1] he then has either three or one. Probably the one eye was rejected as too hideous for presentation.

Close to the Cyclops, in the mouth of the cave, are two persons, the figure of one is mutilated beyond the hope of recognition, the other naïvely clasps a tree as if still frightened at the Cyclops even when sleeping, also perhaps in terror of the deed about to be done. Behind the giant, four figures are struggling to raise a huge pole, "like in size to the mast of a black ship of twenty oars;" the fourth and front figure seems to try and direct it towards the giant's eye; the action of the farthest standing figure exactly repre-

[1] We can study this unlovely one-eyed conception at its best in a finely executed bronze in the British Museum (published as frontispiece to the translation of "The Odyssey," by S. H. Butcher and A. Lang). Nothing can make him pleasing, but the monster's deformity is somewhat veiled by his splendid luxuriantly treated hair. The one eye is rendered with happy vagueness, and the small size of the head (two and a half inches) helps to tone down its ugliness.

The most morbid craving after sensationalism in the portrayal of the Cyclops may be satisfied by the shameless realism of a wall-painting found at Corneto, in the third chamber of the tomb of Orcus.



Pl. 2.

ents the action attributed to Odysseus by Homer, "while , from my place aloft, turned it about."[1] I think, however, hat the front figure, distinguished from the rest by his ornamented cuirass, and occupying, so to speak, the place of honour, is meant to be Odysseus. We have, however, another alternative interpretation: the figure in the cuirass may be a distinguished comrade, perhaps Eurylochus, appointed by Odysseus to superintend the work; and Odysseus himself may be the fully-draped figure seated in the ship. This figure raises his left hand with a gesture of command. The eager action of the four figures who are boring out is very vigorously expressed, and the gradual decline of posture and action from the figure straining on tiptoe to the prostrate unconscious giant, is very pleasant and satisfying; one only desires something to balance it on the opposite side, where the figure seated in the ship is scarcely adequate.

We have a third Etruscan monument (Plate 3), also in the museum at Volterræ, and for completeness' sake it shall be noticed here, though it embodies a later scene, the escape in the ship.

"And swiftly we drave on those stiff-shanked sheep, so rich in fat, and often turned to look about, till we came to the ship. And a glad sight to our fellows were we that had fled from death, but the others they would have bemoaned with tears; howbeit, I suffered it not, but with frowning brows forbade each man to weep. Rather I bade

[1] Οἱ μὲν μοχλὸν ἑλόντες ἐλάϊνον, ὀξὺν ἐπ' ἄκρῳ
ὀφθαλμῷ ἐνέρεισαν ἐγὼ δ' ἐφύπερθεν ἀερθεὶς
δίνεον, ὡς ὅτε τις τρυπῷ δόρυ νήϊον ἀνὴρ
τρυπάνῳ, οἱ δέ τ' ἔνερθεν ὑποσσείουσιν ἱμάντι
ἀψάμενοι ἑκάτερθε, τὸ δὲ τρέχει ἐμμενὲς αἰεί.

Od. ix. 382.

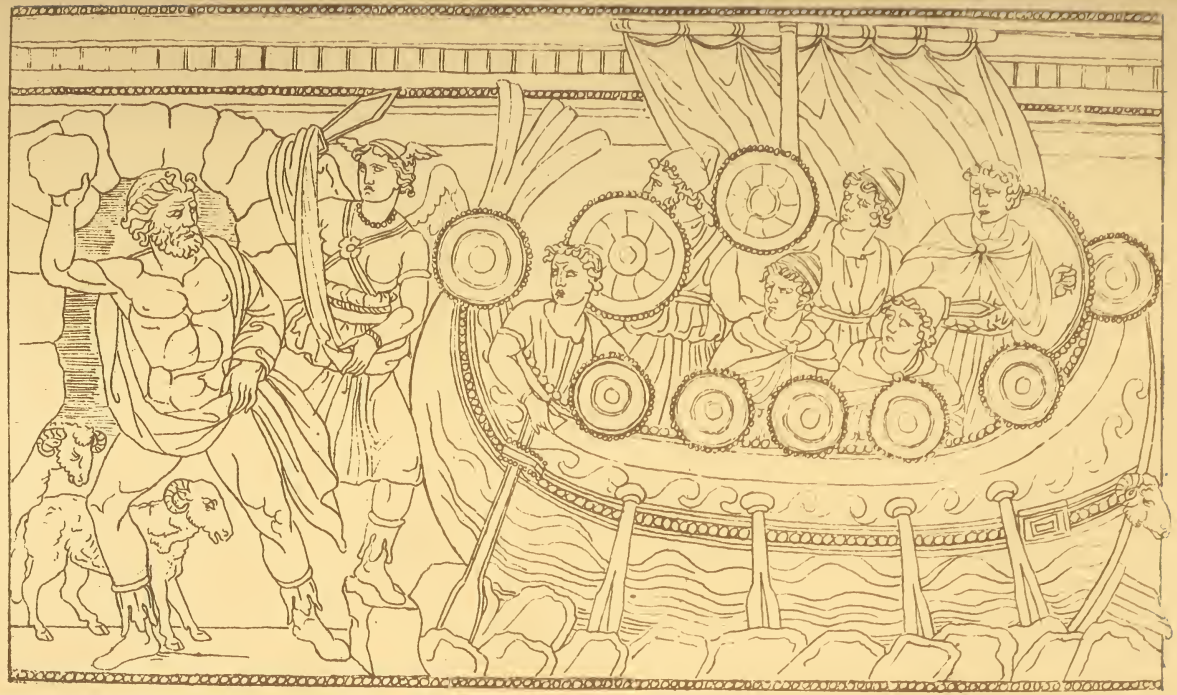
them to cast on board the many sheep with goodly fleece, and to sail over the salt sea-water. So they embarked forthwith, and sate upon the benches, and, sitting orderly, smote the grey sea-water with their oars. But when I had not gone so far but that a man's shout might be heard, then I spake unto the Cyclops, taunting him:

"'Cyclops, so thou wert not to eat the company of a weakling by main might in thy hollow cave! Thine evil deeds were very sure to find thee out, thou cruel man, who hadst no shame to eat thy guests within thy gates, wherefore Zeus hath requited thee, and the other gods.'

"So I spake, and he was yet the more angered at heart, and he brake off the peak of a great hill and threw it at us, and it fell in front of the dark-prowed ship."

This is the moment chosen by the artist—Odysseus and his comrades are already in the ship, a richly ornamented Roman-looking galley. The comrades are certainly "sitting orderly" enough—at least the three who are rowing; the faces are terror-stricken, but there is a want of life in the attitudes. Odysseus, distinguished by his richer shield and more ornamented pilos, stands up to shout his taunt; the Cyclops is accompanied by two rams to represent his flocks, one just emerging from the cave behind; his hand is lifted to hurl the stone. A curious and thoroughly Etruscan addition to the picture is the woman figure with winged head and uplifted sword. She is a sort of genius who would protect Odysseus from the fury of the giant. This relief is, I think, scarcely equal to the two preceding either in conception or execution.

So far our monuments have been taken from a late period of art, and though executed with unusual skill and



Pl. 3.

care, have lacked strength and originality. We turn back now, by a somewhat violent but most instructive transition, to a specimen of very archaic ceramography.

The design in Plate 4 is from a cylix found at Nola. The figures are black, on a ground of pale dull red. On the right is a stiffly-seated figure, Polyphemus; he holds in either hand the leg of a dismembered comrade of Odysseus. Even in these early simple times there was a decorous reserve as to the depicting of horrors. The Cyclops has a bristly beard, and his long hair falls curiously down the back of his neck. It seems fastened back by formal bands into a sort of bag. Odysseus, beardless, stands in front and offers him the one-handled kissubion, or ivy cup, to drink from. Odysseus appears to hold the cup rather to the nose than the mouth of the Cyclops. At the same time, with the help of the three companions behind him, he plunges a long sharpened pole apparently into the eye on the other side of the giant's face. The parallelism in the attitudes of the four advancing Greeks is very quaint. Above them extends a long serpent, whose jaws open on Polyphemus; beneath, turned the opposite way, is a fish, which seems about to swallow a bait. Possibly the fish in some way symbolises Polyphemus, perhaps as son of Poseidon, perhaps because of the stupid ferocity with which it swallows the proffered bait. About the spotted serpent there is much difference of opinion; it may indicate the cunning of the Greek, or it may represent a sort of sacred, god-sent œstrus, pain and madness that must overtake the Cyclops for his evil deeds. It is, on the other hand, very possible that both fish and serpent are simply due to the *horror vacui* of archaic art.

The cup offered is noticeable; it is of the shape usually

attributed to the kissubion or ivy cup, *i.e.* one-handled. The giant is seen in profile—one eye only is visible, but no doubt a second eye is supposed in the other side. The design in its extreme naïveté is a good specimen of very early ceramography; the figures are wooden, the expression rigid, yet the whole conception is forcible. Three distinct scenes are compressed into one, after the pregnant manner of early art. The meal of the Cyclops, the presentation of the cup, the blinding with the pole—material which would have served to decorate three reliefs on late Etruscan sarcophagi—are bounded by the small circle of an early cylix. It is the work of an artist who has so much to say that he uses the simplest painted words—a mere series of symbols—to say it. These symbols are of almost excessive directness. The severe absence of detail is partly of course due to the lack of skill for elaboration, but it must also have been owing to a child-like simplicity of thought.

Such a design as this, executed some three or four centuries after the latest date we can assign to Homer, compels us to realise how lagging were the steps with which art followed upon literature. It seems strange that language, in which thought finds its fullest and most final expression, should be the first medium of utterance to come to its perfection; painting and sculpture halt far behind.

We left the Cyclops in his moment of anguish. Maddened with pain, he casts away the olive stake and calls with a loud voice on his fellow Cyclopes, who dwelt about him in the caves along the windy heights. They flock together and ask him what mortal is slaying him by force or craft, and the strong Polyphemus makes answer, "My

friends, No-man is slaying me by guile, nor at all by force." Then, with a quaint piety that comes strangely from the mouth of the unholy Cyclopes, they answer, "If, then, No-man is violently handling thee in thy solitude, it can in nowise be that thou shouldest escape the sickness sent by mighty Zeus. Nay, pray thou to thy father, the lord Poseidon." Odysseus laughs in his heart at the success of his shallow device. "But the Cyclops, groaning and travailing in pain, groped with his hands and lifted away the stone from the door of the cave, and himself sat in the entry, with arms outstretched to catch, if he might, any one that was going forth with his sheep, so witless, methinks, did he hope to find me."

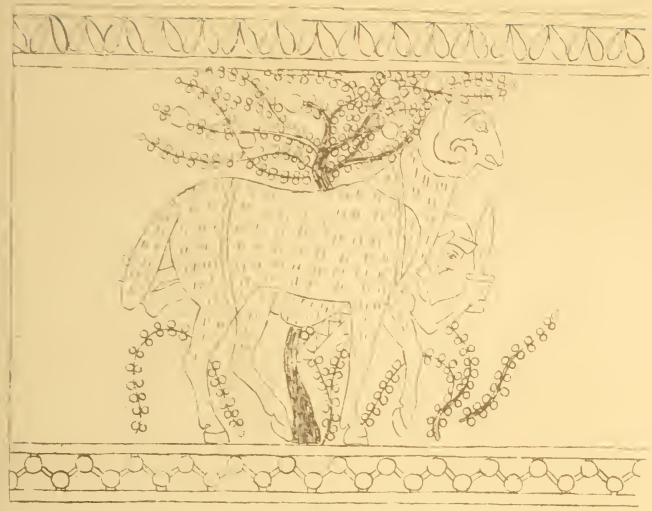
At the door of his cave we shall see the Cyclops seated. Meanwhile Odysseus weaves all manner of craft how he may escape. "And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. The rams of the flock were well nurtured, and thick of fleece, great and goodly, with wool dark as the violet. Quietly I lashed them together with twisted withies, whereon the Cyclops slept, that lawless monster. Three together I took; now the middle one of the three would bear each a man, but the other twain went on either side, saving my fellows. Thus every three sheep have their man. But as for me, I laid hold of the back of a young ram, who was far the best and goodliest of all the flock, and, curled beneath his shaggy belly, there I lay, and so clung, face upward, grasping the wondrous fleece with a steadfast heart."

This device of Odysseus is quaintly figured on more than one early vase with black figures, never, so far as we know, on one of later period, when the red figures appear

on the black ground. Curiously enough, in no instance is the Homeric story strictly adhered to; the comrades, as well as Odysseus, appear clinging or lashed to a *single* ram. I think this discrepancy is partly accounted for by the early date of the monuments; to depict three rams running parallel, with a comrade visible beneath the central one, would have severely taxed the skill of the early artist. Also, it was quite in the manner of Greek symbolism to indicate the many by the one. Later ceramography perhaps felt that the situation lacked heroic dignity; this is much to be regretted, as the treatment of so curious a subject in the best period of vase-painting would have been full of interest.

In Plates 5*a* and *b* we have the obverse and reverse design of a vase, both dealing with this adventure. On the obverse is a spreading tree with fruit; possibly this tree, found frequently in Polyphemus vases, indicates the fruitful land of the Cyclops, or the "tall pines and oaks with high crown of leaves." In front of it is a ram curiously spotted. Odysseus is attached somewhat vaguely to the ram; in one hand he lifts a sword. This motive of the lifted sword is repeated in a lekythos,[1] now in the British Museum, which bears an inscription, unhappily illegible. The signification of the sword is not quite clear; there may be some idea that the hero is protecting himself, or defying the blind Cyclops, or, again, it may indicate in advance the cutting of the twisted withies. On the reverse the mouth of a cave is figured, and a ram similar to that on the obverse; the figure clasping it

[1] Figured in the translation of the Odyssey by S. H. Butcher and A. Lang, page 152.



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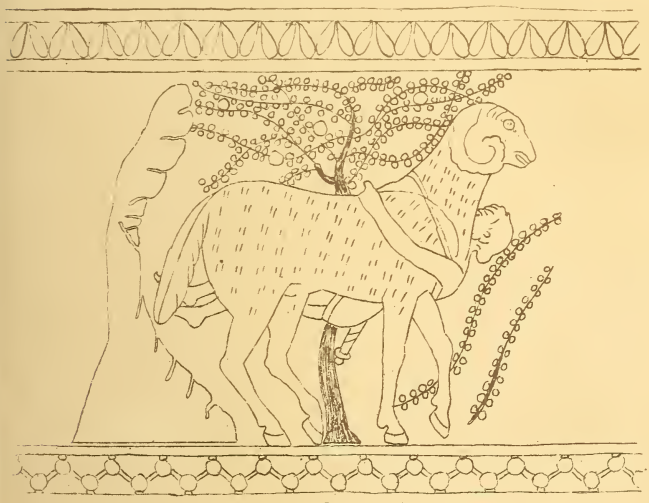


b

beneath is probably a comrade of Odysseus. As in the obverse, the ground is covered by branch-like decorations. These, which occur so frequently in archaic designs, are possibly relics of a time when floral or geometric decoration covered the whole field of the vase, before advance was made to the conception of a group surrounded by clear space. In neither of these designs are the twisted withies very clearly to be seen, but on an Agrigentine amphora (figured in Plate 7*a*) there is no doubt. The comrade clasps the ram firmly with one hand round the back, the other round the neck; but in addition to this he is firmly bound, the "twisted withies" passing over his back and behind his knee. One foot, a very long one, protrudes between the ram's hind legs. The ram himself is unduly elongated to suit the length of the attached comrade. Except for this want of proportion the design is clear and life-like, freer than those in Plate 5*a* and *b*.

Before dealing with what seem to be our most interesting archaic rams, we must advance a step further in the story.

"So soon as early dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then did the rams of the flock hasten forth to pasture, but the ewes bleated unmilked about the pens, for their udders were swollen to bursting. Then their lord, sore stricken with pain, felt along the backs of all the sheep as they stood up before him, and guessed not in his folly how that my men were bound beneath the breasts of his thick-fleeced flocks."

On an oinochoë found in Magna Græcia, now at Berlin, figured in Plate 6*a*, we see the hapless giant. He looks sad and downcast; his head droops, heavy perhaps with

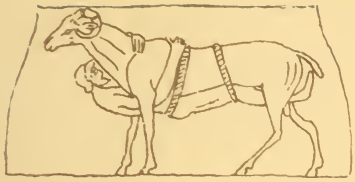
wine; he is not asleep, for his hand is raised as if to touch the ram,—only dazed with pain and misery. Odysseus, screened by the ram (it is not clear how), passes out his sword, naïvely swung, possibly in defiance. The ground of the design is covered with tree-like decorations. Very similar in motive is the design in Plate 6*b*, from an oinochoë in the British Museum.[1] The painting is black on red ground; the outline incised in white; details filled in in white, such as the ram's horn and the mouth of the cave. Odysseus, bearded, clings to the side of the ram. The Cyclops is half reclining under a tree with large white fruit, very similar to that in Plate 5*a*. His right hand is stretched out. In curious opposition to the Homeric account, he feels *under* the ram, and the hero seems on the verge of detection. Slight deviations in details such as this serve clearly to show the free attitude of art towards literature. The artist depicted a story current in everyone's mouth, known probably ages before Homer wrote, and liable to all manner of local variations.

A striking instance of this freedom is seen in the two designs figured in Plate 7*b* and *c*, from a kylix found at Vulci, now at Wurzburg. The figures are black on red ground, and are inscribed, but the characters are now illegible. Polyphemus in the one design holds his club, in the other a sort of chlamys is folded over his arm. But the curious point is that the giant is here represented as himself driving out the flocks, with Odysseus and his comrades lashed beneath them; he is either actually shepherding them, or pursuing them for vengeance. In either case the artist boldly

[1] My attention was drawn to this vase (hitherto I believe unpublished) by Mr. Cecil Smith of the British Musuem.

a

b



a

b

c

runs counter to Homer, for we remember, "when we had gone but a little way from the cave and from the yard, first I loosed myself from under the ram, and then I set my fellows free. And swiftly we drove on those stiff-shanked sheep, so rich in fat, and often turned to look about, till we came to the ship." Clearly the giant was not present. I have little doubt that this monument, though I place it here because of its subject, belongs to a class we shall consider later, works of art dealing with comic mimes, parodies of the Odyssey story.

We will not close Homer with a burlesque. We have kept back one archaic ram, and before he passes out, his master shall make to him his pathetic appeal, "for the strong Polyphemus laid his hands on him and spake to him, saying, Dear ram, wherefore, I pray thee, art thou the last of all the flocks to go forth from the cave, who of old wast not wont to lag behind the sheep, but wert ever the foremost to pluck the tender blossom of the pasture, faring with long strides, and wert still the first to come to the streams of the rivers, and didst first long to return to the homestead in the evening. But now art thou the very last. Surely thou art sorrowing for the eye of thy lord, which an evil man blinded with his accursed fellows, when he had subdued my wits with wine, even No-man, who I say hath not yet escaped destruction."

A moment so beautiful as this could scarcely escape the artist. In the design figured in Plate 8*a*, we see Polyphemus seated half-recumbent at the mouth of the cave. His eager scrutiny is over; in his left hand he holds his club, but with the right he no longer feels for the comrades beneath the ram. Sorrow has supplanted search. The hand which should be blindly groping is lifted piteously in appeal, with just the gesture that in early art indicates

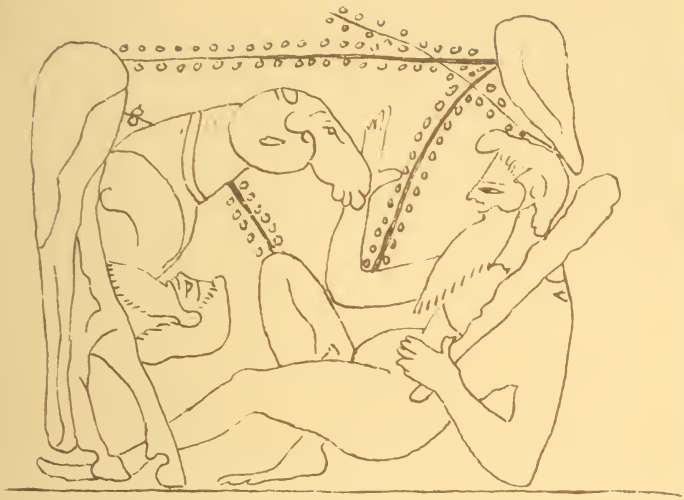
speech. The design is only slightly sketched; it is scarcely equal in finish or power to that in Plate 6*b*. The actual tree there observable is absent, but the branch-like decorations remain. We are glad to learn that a vase so beautiful should have been found at Athens, but somewhat surprised, as Odyssey myths have, except through Athene, little connection with the Attic cycles.

Lest this last archaic ram should seem somewhat slight and meagre, we will turn finally to one of later date and finer fleece. Such a goodly creature, cumbered with his wool, fit to be the darling of his lord, we have in the marble statue figured in Plate 8*b*.[1] The attitude of Odysseus huddled up in abject fear contrasts finely with the proud bearing of the ram. We realise what a trial it must have been even to the "much-enduring Odysseus" to cling in this posture; waiting "with patient heart for the dawn." The ram, in contrast to Homer's account, still "fares" with long strides; we could almost think he was pleased to serve his new master. Still we know that he was faithful to the old, for we shall find him in later days sorrowing anew, when his lord suffers a fresh disaster.

Some five or six hundred years later we meet the Homeric Cyclops again, in the Satyric drama of Euripides, which bears the monster's name. His features are little changed. He and his comrades are still the "one-eyed children of the Ocean God;"[2] they dwell "on a wild Etnæan

[1] A somewhat similar motive is embodied in a small bronze statue of Odysseus clinging to the ram, now in the British Museum.

[2] "ἐς Αἰτναίαν πέτραν
ἵν' οἱ μονῶπες ποντίου παῖδες θεοῦ
Κύκλωπες οἰκοῦσ' ἄντρ' ἔρημ' ἀνδροκτόνοι."—EUR. *Cycl.*, 21, 22.
"τῷ τε δυσσεβεῖ
Κύκλωπι δείπνων ἀνοσίων διάκονος."—31, 32.



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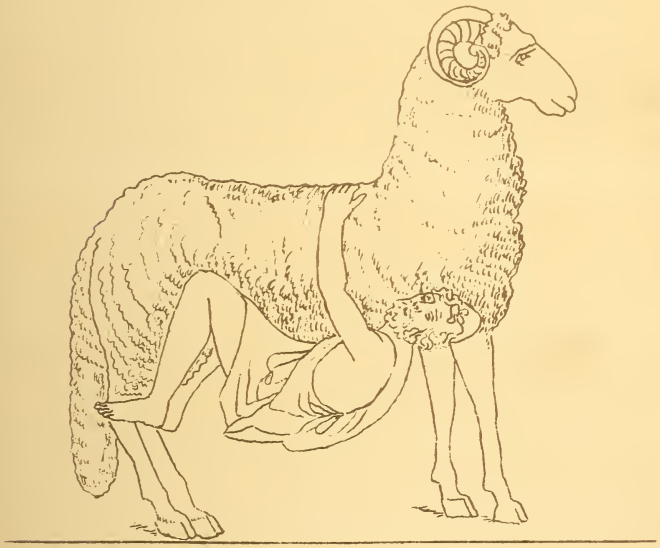


b

Pl. 8.

rock," and still consume the "impious and abominable meal." The lapse of five centuries has not taught them to know in their ungracious land the "Bromian wine," the "Bacchic dew of joy-inspiring grapes." It is curious how to the Greeks this ignorance of the taste of wine and inability to resist it seemed so specially characteristic of the typical barbarian, whether Centaur or Cyclops.[1] We need scarcely say that in the hands of Euripides the Cyclops loses nothing of his scepticism. Something of sophistic subtlety is added to the old rude blasphemy. It is strange to hear the stupid giant expound at length his brutal logic:

"Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's god;
All other things are a pretence and boast.
What are my father's ocean promontories,
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolts.
. . . . . .
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,
To eat and drink during his little day,
And give himself no care. And as for those
Who complicate with laws the life of men,
I freely give them tears for their reward.
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,
Or hesitate in dining upon you;
And that I may be quit of all demand,
These are my hospitable gifts, fierce fire
And yon ancestral cauldron, which, o'erbubbling,
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh."[2]—SHELLEY, *Cyclops.*

[1] See *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. i. page 145, where this common savage peculiarity is noted by Professor Colvin.

[2] "ὁ πλοῦτος, ἀνθρωπίσκε, τοῖς σοφοῖς θεός·
τὰ δ' ἄλλα κόμποι καὶ λόγων εὐμορφίαι.
ἄκρας δ' ἐναλίας ἃς καθίδρυται πατὴρ
χαίρειν κελεύω· τί τάδε προὐστήσω λόγῳ;
Ζηνὸς δ' ἐγὼ κεραυνὸν οὐ φρίσσω, ξένε,

From the Cyclops of Euripides we get indeed less of howling and whooping, more of articulate speech, but his manner of life is the same. As the play was a satiric drama (the only one left us), naturally the scene of the wine-cup is emphasised, to the honour of the god Dionysos. It may be due to this that so many of our late art monuments embody this particular motive, the offering of the cup. There is nothing to mark that the intent is specially Euripidean, but they might well have been inspired by words such as these :—

> "I filled
> The cup of Maron, and I offered him
> To taste, and said, 'Child of the Ocean God,
> Behold what drinks the wines of Greece produce,
> The exultation and the joy of Bacchus.' " [1]

Such designs are figured in Plates 9*a*, *b*, *c*. Plate 9*b*, from a gem, is noticeable because it partly reproduces the motive of the archaic cylix, only in more modern fashion. Odysseus approaches with the wine-cup in his right hand, in his left a lance, as if the drinking of the wine and the blinding of the eye were to be simultaneous.

In another gem, Plate 9*a*, we see Odysseus with the wine-skin preparing to pour the wine into a cup.

> Ζεὺς οὗτος ἀνθρώποισι τοῖσι σώφροσι,
> λυπεῖν δὲ μηδὲν αὐτόν· οἳ δὲ τοὺς νόμους
> ἔθεντο, ποικίλλοντες ἀνθρώπων βίον,
> κλαίειν ἄνωγα· τὴν δ' ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγὼ
> οὐ παύσομαι δρῶν εὖ κατεσθίων τε σέ·
> ξένιά τε λήψει τοιάδ', ὡς ἄμεμπτος ὦ,
> πῦρ καὶ πατρῷον τόδε λέβητά θ', ὃς ζέσας
> σὴν σάρκα δυσφόρητον ἀμφέξει καλῶς."—*Cycl.*, 316.
>
> [1] " ὦ παῖ ποντίου θεοῦ, Κύκλωψ,
> σκέψαι τόδ' οἷον Ἕλλὰς ἀμπέλων ἄπο
> θεῖον κομίζει πῶμα, Διονύσου γάνος."—*Cycl.*, 413.

a

b

c

Pl. 9.

The motive of the offering of the cup is finely reproduced in a statue of the Roman period in the Villa Pamfili (Plate 9*c*). The giant is not presented, but his size is sensible by the gesture of the head of Odysseus, the direction of his eye, and the upraised hand. He also looks as if he were ready for retreat at a moment's notice.

On the other hand, Euripides may well have borrowed from some vase or frieze his description of the drunken giant :—

> "Ho ! ho ! I scarce can rise. What pure delight !
> The heavens and earth appear to whirl about
> Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove
> And the clear congregation of the gods.
> Now, if the graces tempted me to kiss,
> I would not for the loveliest of them all,
> I would not leave this Ganymede." [1]—SHELLEY.

It seems strange that art has left us, so far as we know, nothing that we can certainly and distinctly call a Euripidean monument. Scenes from the Dionysiac cycle of myths abound, and we might have expected some artist would group around the Cyclops Silenus and his Satyrs. But we look in vain. History tells us that the great Timanthes painted a picture in which a Satyr is measuring the thumb of a sleeping Cyclops, but the Satyr was probably only introduced to indicate the giant's size.

[1] "*ἰοὺ ἰού,*
ὡς ἐξένευσα μόγις· ἄκρατος ἡ χάρις·
ὁ δ' οὐρανός μοι συμμεμιγμένος δοκεῖ
τῇ γῇ φέρεσθαι, τοῦ Διός τε τὸν θρόνον
λεύσσω τὸ πᾶν τε δαιμόνων ἀγνὸν σέβας·
οὐκ ἂν φιλήσαιμ'· αἱ Χάριτες πειρῶσί με·
ἄλις Γανυμήδην τόνδ' ἔχων ἀναπαύσομαι
κάλλιστα νὴ τὰς χάριτας."—Cycl., 574-583.

In the play of Euripides we hear nothing of the escape beneath the ram. It would no doubt have been a difficult subject for scenic representation; also it had no special Dionysiac significance.

We pass to another class of monuments, which, though we cannot call them Euripidean, represent a literary and artistic phase which was in some degree the descendant of the Satyric drama. I mean the class of monuments whose character is distinctly comic. There is a tinge of humour in the representation on the early cylix, (Plate 4), but it is humour of a very naïve, and, I think, unconscious sort. Turning to Plate 10*a*, we see the comic element of the scene pushed to pure burlesque.

The subject here figured is from an amphora in the British Museum; the design is in black or red, with accessories in a sort of dull chocolate, the style possibly archaistic (*i.e.* pseudo-archaic), the attitudes exaggerated. The Cyclops has the conventional long beard, and thick, conventionally treated hair. The three men who are about to blind him are dressed in short chitons, with swords stuck into their belts. The first, possibly meant for Odysseus, plants his foot on the chest of the Cyclops in order to get more purchase, and it may be partly as a gesture of contempt. The other four appear to be executing a kind of rhythmic, impromptu dance. The whole design is clearly a burlesque. If we place it by the side of the cylix in Plate 4, the caricature is, I think, unmistakable. There we have the same general motive, but the tone is serious, however quaint and inadequate its treatment. In Plate 10*b*, a design from a crater found at Cervetri, we have, I think, the same humorous

b

intent, but the execution is much rougher; the short swords again appear, but they are stuck awkwardly across the chest. The foremost Greek seems to be trampling on the fallen master, but the drawing is far from clear; the hindmost is leaning against the cave so as to drive the stake more forcibly home. The free spaces between the figures are strewn with curious rosettes, due, at least originally, to the *horror vacui* of archaic style. The figures here are not actually dancing, but the comic intent is evident from the disproportionate size of the faces and the length of the noses. The execution is very rough and careless.

We do not associate such designs as these with the Satyric drama of Euripides, because of the absence of satyrs, and also because the burlesque seems excessive. We know, however, that there did exist literary productions where the Odyssey story was distinctly caricatured. Kratinos wrote a sort of parody or comic version of the Odyssey (διασυρμοὶ τῆς Ὀδυσσείας Ὁμήρου), and no doubt in this the Cyclops would play a prominent part. Had the vases we have figured been intended as definite copies of a scene from Kratinos, the persons represented would probably have worn the comic mask. Perhaps more exactly to our point is an incidental mention in Horace of some mimic performance representing the Cyclops:

> "permulta jocatus,
> Pastorem saltaret uti Cyclopa rogabat."
>
> HORAT. *Sat.* i. v. 63.

Art, I think, here confirms the slight suggestions of literature, and makes us feel sure that the Cyclops story, always bordering on the ludicrous, was utilised to the utmost

for the purposes of broad farce. It is remarkable that the three vases we have noted as decorated with these distinctly comic designs are all from Vulci or its neighbourhood. Italy was the proper home of the low burlesque.[1]

We have placed the Homeric and Euripidean Cyclops with their descendants together, widely separated though they are by time, because the later is distinctly borrowed from the earlier. But we must retrace our steps as far as Hesiod. With him genealogy and functions are alike widely different. The Cyclops of Homer, distinguished *by name* (though belonging to a large tribe), is himself one, Polyphemus, the loud-roarer. Hesiod knows of three by name, Brontes, Steropes, Arges—Thunder, Lightning, and Swift-Brightness. Homer's Cyclops is son to Poseidon and the sea-nymph Thoösa, daughter of Phorkys; Hesiod's three brothers are children of Ouranos and Gaia. Homer's Cyclopes are unsocial herdsmen, mortal in their manners and customs; they eat cheese and milk. Hesiod's, but for their one eye, are very like to the gods. Most important of all, Homer's Cyclops defies Zeus himself, and lives in open rebellion; Hesiod's are diligent and orderly craftsmen, who forge the thunderbolts of Zeus, and must therefore needs obey him, though they are still high-hearted.[2]

[1] There is much discussion as to whether these vases are genuinely archaic or merely archaistic. I am quite unable to decide the question, but it does not affect the point I desire to emphasise, *i.e.* the intentionally comic character of these monuments. Early art was, I believe, usually serious, but I see nothing impossible in the idea that there may have been an occasional lapse into the burlesque. Much licensed buffoonery mingled, we know, with the service of the gods, and relaxed the strain of intenser devotion.

[2] "Γείνατο δ' αὖ Κύκλωπας ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ ἔχοντας,
Βρόντην τε Στερόπην τε καὶ Ἄργην ὁμβριμόθυμον,
οἳ Ζηνὶ βροντήν τ' ἔδοσαν τεῦξάν τε κεραυνόν·

As forgemen the Cyclopes kept their character steadily down to late days; we may see them on a Campanian wall-painting working with the god Hephaistos. The design in Plate 11 is from the Pompeian Casa delle Quadrighe. In the centre, on a yellow rock, an anvil is fixed; before it is seated Hephaistos, a red chlamys thrown over his hips; he slings his hammer over his shoulder, about to let it fall on the metal work which he has on the anvil. In the background is the hearth with a glowing fire, which, however, casts no light or shade. Opposite Hephaistos stand two of his Cyclops workmen; there is nothing of the monster about them; their attitudes are full of life and vigour; all the picture seems to resound with the clanging of the anvil.[1] The face of Hephaistos is young and beautiful; those of the Cyclopes are too mutilated for the expression to be discernible.

We are sorry to find that these goodly craftsmen were put to ignoble use by Olympian matrons. Callimachus tells us that if one of the baby-goddesses would not do as she was bid, her lady mother used to call a Cyclops to come and take her, so to speak, up the chimney. Let us

> οἱ δ' ἦτοι τὰ μὲν ἄλλα θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιοι ἦσαν,
> μοῦνος δ' ὀφθαλμὸς μέσσῳ ἐνέκειτο μετώπῳ
> ἰσχύς τ' ἠδὲ βίη καὶ μηχαναὶ ἦσαν ἐπ' ἔργοις."
>
> HESIOD. *Theog.* 139.

[1] Such a picture as this, Callimachus (260 B.C.), might have seen when he wrote:

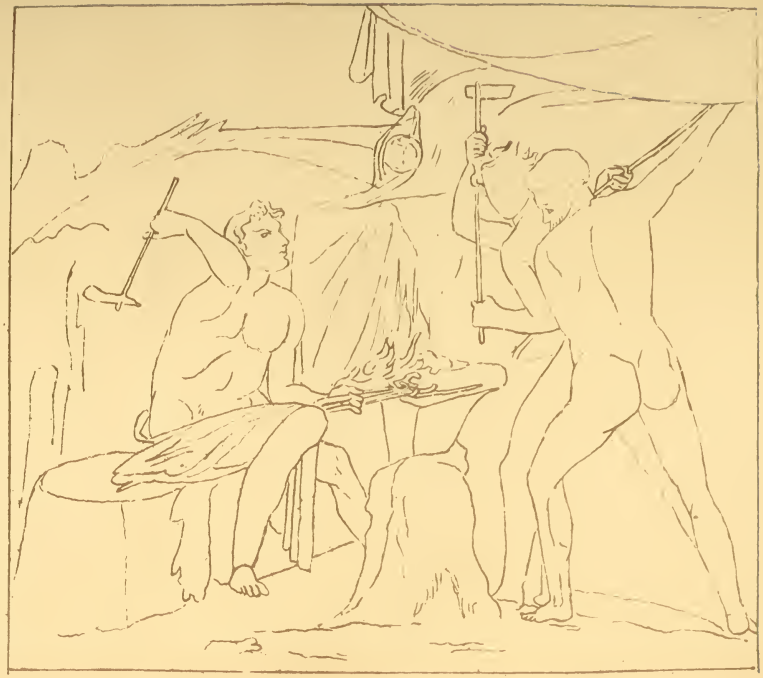
> "Αἶθι δὲ Κύκλωπας μετεκίαθε. τοὺς μὲν ἔτετμε
> νήσῳ ἐνὶ Λιπάρῃ (Λιπάρη νέον, ἀλλὰ τότ' ἔσκεν
> οὔνομά οἱ Μελιγουνίς) ἐπ' ἄκμοσιν Ἡφαίστοιο
> ἑσταότας περὶ μύδρον· ἐπείγετο γὰρ μέγα ἔργον.
> . . . . . .
> εὖθ' οἵ γε ῥαιστῆρας ἀειράμενοι ὑπὲρ ὤμων
> ἢ χαλκὸν ζείοντα καμινόθεν ἠὲ σίδηρον
> ἀμβολαδὶς τετυπόντες, ἐπὶ μέγα μοχθήσειαν."
>
> CALLIM. *Dian.* 46.

hope the Olympian babies had good nerves, for though neither "Arges" nor "Steropes" responded to the summons Hermes blacked his face with a coal, and counterfeited a Cyclops with excellent effect.[1]

The forge of the blacksmith Cyclopes was placed either at Ætna or the Lipari Isles, or sometimes at Lemnos; in fact, wherever a volcanic neighbourhood suggested. They have a curious Keltic parallel: Maildun, the Irish Odysseus, among other perils has to pass by "the island of big blacksmiths." But the Irish craftsmen are not orderly workers like the servants of Hephaistos; they are ready to desert their anvil at a moment's notice to play the more congenial part of the sea robber Polyphemus. Maildun does not even land, but for all that he barely escapes, for one of the giants runs down to the shore with long heavy strides, and flings a mass of molten iron with all his might after the pigmy curragh. Like the rock of Polyphemus, it falls a little short, and plunging down just near the prow causes the whole sea to hiss and boil and heave up round the boat. But Maildun and his comrades ply their oars, and quickly get beyond his reach and sail out into the open ocean.

The Irish Cyclops combines somewhat both of the Homeric and Hesiodic qualities; but the accounts of Hesiod and Homer are, as we have seen, markedly diverse. Controversy used to run high as to which of the conceptions was prior to the other. Recently much attention has been

[1] "ἀλλ' ὅτε κουράων τίς ἀπειθέα μητέρι τεύχει
μήτηρ μὲν Κύκλωπας ἐῇ ἐπὶ παιδὶ καλιστρεῖ
Ἄργην ἢ Στερόπην· ὁ δὲ δώματος ἐκ μυχάτοιο
ἔρχεται Ἑρμείης σποδιῇ κεχρημένος αἰθῇ·
αὐτίκα τὴν κούρην μορμύσσεται· ἡ δὲ τεκούσης
δύνει ἔσω κόλπους, θεμένη ἐπὶ φάεσι χεῖρας."—CALLIM. *Dian.*, 67.



drawn to another race of Cyclopes, who may have been the ancestors of both, and who claim our reverence as the legendary fathers of Greek architecture. Most peoples who have a past, and whose past has left them vast masses of masonic structure, are wont to attribute such monuments to some pre-existing, half-dæmonic race of giants, whose strength surpassed that of the pigmies of later days. Such a tradition prevailed among the Greeks; at Tiryns, at Mykenæ, were huge masses of stone-work, which it seemed to the men of modern times mortal hands could never have upreared,[1] so they fabled that the Cyclopes built them,[2] often under the direction of some Greek hero, as the wild sea-giant Poseidon raised the walls of Troy to the sound of Apollo's lyre. Sometimes these Cyclopes are autochthonic; sometimes a hero brings them from foreign lands.[3] Their most familiar bit of work—wrought possibly in the day of Homer himself—we give in Plate 12, the famous lions that guarded the gates of Mykenæ. Their character, and that of the pillar at each side of which they stand in heraldic posture, is foreign to later Greek art. They may well have been the work of some Lycian or Lydian craftsman in prehistoric times.[4] Pausanias tells us that in his

[1] "τὸ δὴ τεῖχος (Τίρυνθος) ὃ δὴ μόνον τῶν ἐρειπίων λείπεται Κυκλώπων μέν ἐστιν ἔργον, πεποίηται δὲ ἀργῶν λίθων μέγεθος ἔχων ἕκαστος λίθος ὡς ἀπ' αὐτῶν μηδ' ἂν ἀρχὴν κινηθῆναι τὸν μικρότατον ὑπὸ ζεύγους ἡμιόνων—λιθία δὲ ἐνήρμοσται πάλαι ὡς μάλιστα αὐτῶν ἕκαστον ἁρμονίαν τοῖς μεγάλοις λίθοις εἶναι."

[2] "ὦ κυκλωπίδες ἑστίαι, ὦ πατρὶς
Μυκήνα φίλα."—Eur. *Iph. in Taur.* 845.

[3] "Τῇ μὲν οὖν Τίρυνθι ὁρμητηρίῳ χρήσασθαι δοκεῖ Προῖτος καὶ τειχίσαι διὰ Κυκλώπων, οὓς ἑπτὰ μὲν εἶναι καλεῖσθαι δὲ γαστερόχειρας τρεφομένους ἐκ τῆς τέχνης, ἥκειν δὲ μεταπέμπτους ἐκ Λυκίας."—Strabo, viii. 373.

[4] Mr. Murray (*History of Greek Sculpture*) notes that these lions are sculptured in stone "in the low flat relief characteristic of the system of decoration evolved from working in bronze. Their heads had been of

days tradition assigned them to the Cyclopes who helped Prœtus to fortify Tiryns.[1] If they seem to us somewhat gaunt and uncouth, we must remember that they still claim our reverence; they have kept their steadfast watch over the dead Atridæ for full thirty centuries, and those who have seen them [2] in their own place tell how well their rude proportions blend with the rough Cyclopean walls around. No picture is left us of the workmen; we must be content to gaze at what they have wrought.

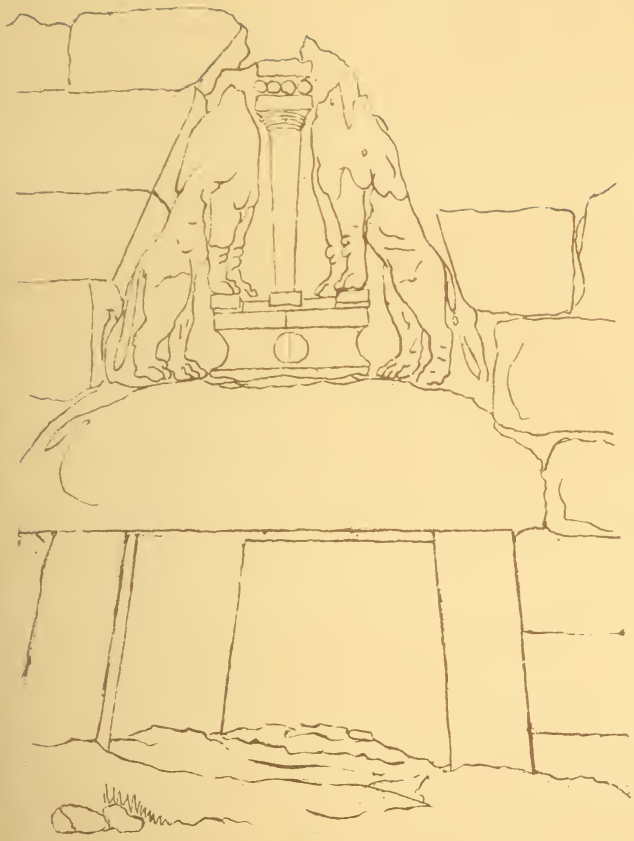
It is not hard to see that at the root of all these three Cyclops conceptions there lies the one thought, diverse though its forms may be, of mighty nature-forces, existing before man and, in the earlier stages of his civilisation, beyond his power to control. These forces are akin to the gods (hence the parentage assigned both by Homer and Hesiod), because they are mightier than man. But they are not wholly god-like, because they are formless, unmeasured, uncouth.

Teutonic mythology has a whole theogony of such giants, dæmons of the sea, the air, fire, and the earth; Beli, the loud roarer, is a sea-giant, so is Thrud Gelmir of the mighty voice. Oegir, a sea robber, keeps a huge cauldron that might match the ancestral vessel of Polyphemus; but

separate pieces and are now wanting, but whether they had consisted of metal, as some have thought, is at best uncertain. The attitude is no other than that with which we are familiar from the art of Assyria, a country whence it would seem the early Greeks had drawn their artistic knowledge of this animal in general. There is, however, a bold spirit in the execution suggestive of the dawn of an individual faculty for art in Greece itself."

[1] "Λείπεται δὲ ὅμως ἔτι καὶ ἄλλα τοῦ περιβόλου καὶ ἡ πύλη· λέοντες δὲ ἐφεστήκασιν αὐτῇ· Κυκλώπων δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ἔργα εἶναι λέγουσιν οἱ Προίτῳ τὸ τεῖχος ἐποίησαν ἐν Τίρυνθι."—PAUS. ii. 16, 5.

[2] *Essays on Art and Archæology.* C. T. Newton.



he is no hermit; he has a wild, uncouth water wife, Ran, who does him good service by catching drowning sailors. In the German legends fire and water giants are in close connection, so that we need not wonder at the kinship between the son of Poseidon and the workmen of Hephaistos. We find the same rebellion against the gods; the German giants contend with Odin and are defeated by him. Polyphemus is quite in character when he blasphemes the gods, though he is near akin to them. Giant morality among the Teutons was higher than among the Greeks—"Treu wie Riesen" is a proverb which would scarcely have gained currency in the land of Polyphemus.

These wild nature-forces, whether of water or of fire, were in themselves, so to speak, neutral; they might be tamed to the service of the gods and of men; then we have Cyclopes forging thunderbolts and uprearing masonry; they might expend themselves in lawless violence; then we have the giant-robber of many lands. But the special characteristic of the Greek giant-robber is, as was likely, that he lacks *social* virtue; no more dismal,[1] more barbarian picture could be presented to the mind of the city-loving Greek than that of a "froward, lawless folk, who have neither gatherings for council nor oracles of law." Thus the Cyclopes became for Greek political writers[2] the type of primitive barbarism, when the family was the only social unit. For such a state as this the Homeric Greek, with his social instincts, would naturally feel an "almost physical

[1] Cf. the sad words of Atys:—

"Egone a mea remota hæc fera in nemora domo?
Patria bonis amicis genitoribus abero?
Abero *foro* palæstris stadio et gymnasiis?"

[2] "Δοκοῦσί μοι πάντες τὴν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ πολιτείαν δυναστείαν καλεῖν ἢ

loathing, which would express itself by describing such barbarians as monsters, or even (which is almost always the case in Oriental mythology) as demons."[1]

No doubt travellers' strange tales of cave cannibals who dwelt on the shores of Sicily and Africa helped out the details of the Cyclops picture; and a sea-loving folk would feel and express natural contempt for a coast race who, with all natural advantages to hand, yet built them no ships "with vermilion prows," whereby they might "voyage to the towns of men."

It is perhaps not to the credit of humanity that, among the mythologies of many nations, it is not the architect nor the craftsman Cyclops who most often meets us, but the one-eyed cannibal robber-giant. Among peoples the most diverse—Kelts, Teutons, Oghuzians, Esthonians, Indians, dwellers in Polynesia—we light upon legends which look like scattered shreds of the Homeric tale patched into mythic webs of widely different weaving. Whether these all have some common original, or whether, as seems more likely, they are akin only through the likeness of mankind's early fancies in all times, is one of the problems that still asks comparative mythology to solve it.

Into such far-off fields we may not wander, but where the giants still survive on classic ground we must not pass them over. In Zakynthos the peasants of to-day stand in

καὶ νῦν ἔτι πολλαχοῦ καὶ ἐν Ἕλλησι καὶ κατὰ βαρβάρους ἐστὶ· λέγει δ' αὐτήν που καὶ Ὅμηρος γεγονέναι περὶ τὴν τῶν Κυκλώπων οἴκησιν εἰπών.

"τοῖσιν δ'ουτ ἀγοραὶ," etc.—PLATO, *Leg.* 3-680, B.

"πᾶσα γὰρ οἰκία βασιλεύεται ὑπὸ τοῦ πρεσβυτάτου ὥστε καὶ αἱ ἀποικίαι διὰ τὴν συγγένειαν· Καὶ τοῦτ' ἐστιν ὃ λέγει Ὅμηρος.

"Θεμιστεύει δὲ ἕκαστος," etc.

". . . καὶ οὕτω τὸ ἀρχαῖον ᾤκουν."—ARIST. *Polit.* I. i. 7.

[1] Maine, *Ancient Law.*

awe of monsters of superhuman strength, with one eye only in the middle of the forehead: it is of huge size, and spurts out fire. These giants, however, are more social than the Cyclopes of Homer's days, and they have truly domestic wives who spin and weave. There is also a tradition among the folk-lore of the Arachobites, that in a foreign land dwells a godless race of one-eyed men. The term "one-eyed" is with this people a term equivalent to savage barbarian. When one of their number is about to go into a strange land, they bid him beware lest "the one-eyed fall upon you and eat you" (*οἱ μονομματ' ῥιχνουντ' καὶ σε τρῶνε*).

More direct descendants of the Homeric cannibals still survive in the land of the Theokritean Polyphemus. In the part of Sicily known as the Piane di Greci the peasants still tell a story of "I Ciclopi,"[1] which in its main outlines is the same as the Odyssey tale. These modern Cyclopes make ample amends for the deficient eyesight of their ancestors; they have four eyes, two in front, two behind.

This characteristic of the one eye is in fact by no means common to the Polyphemus of many lands. It is, however, as we have seen in *late* authors and *late* artists, a distinctly emphasised attribute of the Greek giant. Homer, perhaps, seems to assume that his hearers will know that the Cyclops has but one eye; he never states the fact. Possibly the great round burning eye is a sort of symbol of world-

[1] My attention was called to this interesting parallel by the kindness of Miss E. M. Clarke. The story is told in full by Comparetti—"Canti e Racconti del Popolo Italiano."

wide vision, of piercing sight, an attribute of lingering godhead in the inferior demon. To other nations, Egyptians and Persians, with their Eastern love of the marvellous, this inhuman monstrosity might seem an attribute of divinity; but to the Greek, who was always careful of symmetry of form, it became a token of savage deformity. Even the Greek, however, adopted it at one time for his chief god. Pausanias[1] saw in the Akropolis at Argos a wooden image of Zeus Patroös, which had, in addition to the two conventional eyes, a third in the forehead. But what might be tolerated in the hieratic xoanon would be scarcely perpetuated in the ideal Zeus of later days. Whether this round "world-eye," as the Germans call it, was connected with primitive sun-worship or not is hard to determine. Apart from any such origin, there is a terror of concentration about the conception of the one eye, that two, however glaring, lack. Semitic mythology, through the medium of mediæval tradition, still haunts the dreams of children with visions of a being whose

> "piercing Eye
> "Strikes thro' the shades of night."

The one-eyed cannibal giant of many lands still lives as a savage terror, but among the Greeks in later days a strange, unlooked-for fate befell him; by many poets, many painters, the story is told. Let us turn to Plate 13, a relief in the Villa Albani. Here is the Cyclops, Polyphemus, reclining near his cave as of old, huge and ungainly still, with the monstrous eye midway in his forehead. From out of

[1] "*ἐνταῦθα ἀναθήματα κεῖται καὶ ἄλλα καὶ Ζεὺς ξόανον, δύο μὲν ἢ πεφύκαμεν ἔχον ὀφθαλμούς, τρίτον δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου.*"—PAUS. ii. 24.

the cave has come his "dear ram," sorrowing again, but this time not for the eye of his lord; the Cyclops has a worse pain to bear,—a pigmy has dealt him a blow deadlier than the wound of the crafty Odysseus; his wits are subdued, but no longer "with wine." "No-man" has done it, a little winged god, who perches behind him. To the whispering of this god he is listening and neglects his faithful ram. The Cyclops is a shepherd still, but also he is a lover and a minstrel. Surely these two words as applied to Polyphemus are a note of later days and altered fashions. The archaic tree has branched and blossomed into soft foliage, the rigid outline of the giant's shape, his quaint austerity of posture, are alike relaxed since last we met him, and to his soul has come a no less unwonted softness.

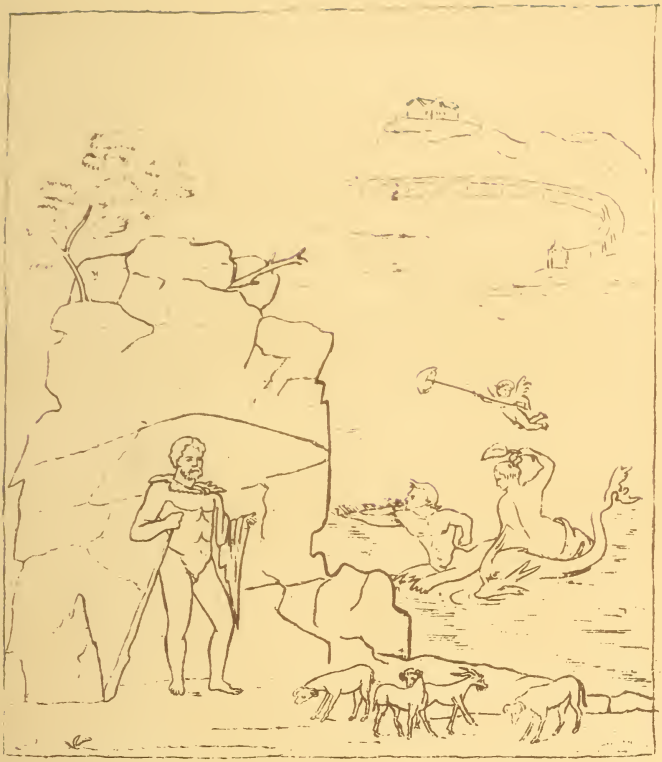
Let us turn to another picture, and see more fully how this all came about. The design in Plate 14 is from a Pompeian wall-painting, and deserves our close attention as a characteristic specimen of Græco-Roman mural decoration. To the left under a high rock stands a giant shepherd, with his conventional club-staff in his right hand, a chlamys thrown over his left arm; in the foreground a group of goats indicate his flock. To the right a dolphin [1] swims by, bearing on his back a maiden; a little ahead a Triton blows a conch. The maiden holds a leaf-shaped fan above her head, and over her a winged Love

[1] Such a picture, whether actually existent or not, and dealing with the story of Galatea, is described by Philostratus:—

"ἡ δ'ἁπαλῇ τῇ θαλάττῃ παίζει τέτρωρον δελφίνων ξυνάγουσα ὁμοζυγούντων τε καὶ τ' αὔτον πνεόντων, παρθένοι δ' αὐτοὺς ἄγουσι Τρίτωνος αἱ δμωαὶ τῆς Γαλατείας, ἐπιστομίζουσαι σφᾶς εἰ ἀγέρωχόν τε καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἡνίαν πράττοιεν· ἡ δ' ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ἁλιπόρφυρον μὲν ἱστίον τῷ ἄρματι, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ αὐγὴ τις ἐπὶ τὸ μέτωπον καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἥκει οὔπω ἡδίων τοῦ τῆς παρειᾶς ἄνθους."—*Eik.* xviii.

hovers bearing her parasol. In the distance is a landscape, hills surmounted by a sort of villa; a wide bay is encircled by terrace and colonnade. The picture tells its own story; the character of its execution we shall note later. Polyphemus it is who stands by the sea-shore with a club-staff under his arm, his flock beside him. To-night it seems "from the green pastures his ewes will stray back self-shepherded to the fold;"[1] for through the blue sea, mounted on the dolphin, the sea-nymph Galatea rides by and casts only a sidelong glance on her yearning lover; she floats away, but he is left "by the seaweed of the beach from the dawn of day, with the direst hurt beneath his breast of mighty Cypris' sending, the wound of her arrow in his heart." Yet he finds a solace in his sadness: let him tell us wherein. "Also I am skilled in piping, as none other of the Cyclopes here; and of thee, my love, my sweet apple, and of myself too, I sing many a tune deep in the night." We saw him under the tree "shepherding his love" to the sound of his uncouth lyre. We have seen him too by the seaside; but he tells us himself that was not the beginning of the mischief. "I fell in love with thee, maiden, on the day when first thou camest with my mother, and didst wish to pluck the hyacinths from the hill, and I was thy guide on the way. But to leave loving thee when once I had seen thee, neither afterward nor now at all have I the strength, even

[1] "πολλάκι καὶ οἷές ποτι τ'. αὔλιον αὖταὶ ἀπῆνθον
χλωρᾶς ἐκ βοτάνας· ὁ δὲ τὰν Γαλάτειαν ἀείδων
αὐτῶ ἐπ' ἀϊόνος κατετάκετο φυκιοέσσας
ἐξ ἀοῦς ἔχθιστον ἔχων ὑποκάρδιον ἕλκος
Κύπριος ἐκ μεγάλας ἃ οἱ ἤπατι πᾶξε βέλεμνον·
ἀλλὰ τὸ φάρμακον εὗρε· καθεζόμενος δ' ἐπὶ πέτρας
ὑψηλᾶς, ἐς πόντον ὁρῶν ἀείδε τοιαῦτα."—THEOK. *Id.* xi. 12-18.



Pl. 14.

from that hour. But to thee all this is nothing; by Zeus, nay, nothing at all."[1]

And how about the maiden herself? Alas! she was cold and shallow-hearted; we may hear her babble of this fierce tender lover to her girl companion. Doris, the sea-nymph, is piqued that the burly giant sees only one maid among the many, and so, woman-like, she comes to twit Galatea with her uncouth swain. "A fine lover you've got, Galatea, this Sicilian shepherd; he's distraught about you; it's the talk of the neighbourhood."

"Hush, Doris; he mayn't be good-looking; but think who he is—son of Poseidon."

"Much good may it do you. If he were son to Zeus himself it wouldn't mend matters,—such a hairy ruffian, and only one eye!"[2]

But one eye, with the dukedom of the sea for its setting, is no blemish to Galatea. In vain Doris with heartless frankness piles up objections: the giant's complexion is amiss, he sings out of tune, his lyre is not the correct shape; Galatea clings to her suitor, well born, if ill-favoured. Such is Lucian's account; but the poet, writing long before, has left us a fairer picture than the cynic of this coquettish

[1] "*ἠράσθην μὲν ἔγωγα τεοῦς κόρα, ἠνίκα πρᾶτον*
ἦνθες ἐμᾷ σὺν ματρί, θελοισ' ὑακίνθανα φύλλα
ἔξ ὄρεος δρέψασθαι· ἐγὼ δ' ὁδὸν ἀγεμόνευον—
παύσασθαι δ' ἐσιδὼν τὶ καὶ ὕστερον οὐδέτι πω νῦν
ἐκ τήνω δύναμαι· τὶν δ' οὐ μέλει, οὐ μὰ Δί, οὐδέν."

THEOK. *Id.* xi. 25-29.

[2] "ΔΩΡ. *καλὸν ἐραστὴν ὦ Γαλάτεια τὸν Σικελὸν τοῦτον ποιμένα φασὶν ἐπιμεμηνέναι σοί.*

"ΓΑΛ. *Μὴ σκῶπτε Δωρί· Ποσειδῶνος γὰρ υἱός ἐστιν ὁποῖος ἂν ᾖ.*

"ΔΩΡ. *τί οὖν; εἰ καὶ τοῦ Διὸς αὐτοῦ παῖς ὢν ἄγριος οὕτω καὶ λάσιος ἐφαίνετο καὶ τὸ πάντων ἀμορφότατον μονόφθαλμος, οἴει τὸ γένος ἄν τι ὀνῆσαι αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν μορφήν;*"—LUCIAN, *Dial. Marin.* i.

sea-maiden. Daphnis, the shepherd, sings to his fellow Damœtas:

"Galatea is pelting thy flock with apples, Polyphemus; she says the goatherd is a laggard lover. And thou dost not glance at her, O hard, hard, that thou art! but still thou sittest at thy sweet piping. Ah! see again, she is pelting thy dog that follows thee to watch thy sheep. He barks as he looks into the brine, and now the beautiful waves that softly plash reveal him as he runs upon the shore. Take heed that he leap not on the maiden's limbs as she rises from the salt water; see that he rend not her lovely body. Ah! thence again, see she is wantoning, light as dry thistle down in the scorching summer weather. She flies when thou wooing her; when thou woo'st not she pursues after thee."[1]

And Polyphemus makes answer by Damœtas' mouth—"I saw her, by Pan, I saw her when she was pelting my flock. Nay, she escaped not me, escaped not my one dear eye. But it is all to torment her that I in my turn give not back her glances, pretending that I have another love. To hear this makes her jealous of me, by Pæan, and she wastes with pain, and springs madly from the sea, gazing at

[1] "Βάλλει τοι, Πολύφαμε, τὸ ποίμνιον ἁ Γαλάτεια
μάλοισιν, δυσέρωτα τὸν αἰπόλον ἄνδρα καλεῦσα·
καὶ τὸ νιν οὐ ποθόρησθα, τάλαν, τάλαν, ἀλλὰ κάθησαι
ἀδέα συρίσδων· πάλιν ἄδ', ἴδε τὰν κύνα βάλλει
ἁ τοι τὰν ὀΐων ἔπεται σκοπός· ἁ δὲ βαΰσδει
εἰς ἅλα δερκομένα· τὰ δέ νιν καλὰ κύματα φαίνει.
ἄσυχα καχαλάζοντος ἐπ' αἰγιαλοῖο θεοίσαν·
φράσδεο μὴ τᾶς παιδὸς ἐπὶ κνάμαισιν ὀρούσῃ
ἐξ ἁλὸς ἐρχομένας, κατὰ δὲ χρόα καλὸν ἀμύξῃ·
ἁ δὲ καὶ αὐτόθε τοι διαθρύπτεται, ὡς ἀπ' ἀκάνθας
ταὶ καπυραὶ χαῖται, τὸ καλὸν θερος ἀνίκα φρύπγει
καὶ φεύγει φιλέοντα, καὶ οὐ φιλέοντα διώκει."—*Id.* vi. 6-19.

my caves and at my herds. And I hiss on my dog to bark at her, for when I loved Galatea he would whine with joy, and lay his muzzle on her lap. Perchance, when she marks how I use her, she will send me many a messenger; but on her envoys I will shut my door till she promises that herself will make a glorious bridal bed on this island for me." [1]

But for all his proud words the giant is not so sure; so down he goes to the sea again, in hopes of tidings from the maiden. There we may see him in Plate 15. How he hates that sea, shepherd-born as he is. While he waits he cries to Galatea, "Leave the gray sea to roll against the land; more sweetly in this cavern shalt thou fleet the night with me! Thereby the laurels grow, and there the slender cypresses; there is the ivy dun, and the sweet clustered grapes; there is chill water that for me deep-wooded Ætna sends down from the white snow, a draught divine. Ah! who, in place of these, would choose the sea to dwell in, or the waves of the sea?" So he sings to his lyre, that very lyre at which Doris scoffed. We have it pictured here with detailed accuracy—a stag's antlers stripped of the flesh, the horns make the sides,

[1] "εἶδον, ναὶ τὸν Πᾶνα, τὸ ποίμνιον ἀνίκ' ἔβαλλε,
κοὔ μ' ἔλαθ', οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν τὸν ἕνα γλυκύν ᾧ ποθόρημι
ἐς τελος.
. . . . . .
ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ κνίσδων πάλιν οὐ ποθόρημι
ἀλλ' ἄλλαν τινα φαμὶ γυναῖκ' ἔχεν· ἁ δ' αἴοισα
ζαλοῖ μ', ὦ Παιάν, καὶ τάκεται· ἐκ δὲ θαλάσσας
οἰστρεῖ παπταίνοισα ποτ' ἄντρα τε καὶ ποτὶ ποίμνας.
σίξα δ' ὑλακτεῖν νιν καὶ τᾷ κυνί· καὶ γὰρ ὁ κ' ἤρων
αὐτᾶς ἐκνυζᾶτο ποτ' ἴσχια ῥύγχος ἔχοισα·
ταῦτα δ' ἴσως ἐσορεῦσα ποιεῦντά με πολλάκι πεμψεῖ
ἄγγελον· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ κλαξῶ θύρας ἔστε κ' ὀμόσσῃ
αὐτά μοι στορέσειν καλὰ δέμνια τᾶς δ' ἐπὶ νάσω."—*Id.* vi. 20-34.

sinews for strings, not even a peg to tune them with.[1] To-day he has not long to sing. Round the corner comes a mounted "messenger,"[2] bearing in his hand no letter sealed and addressed, but the double tablets[3] of old times, and the eager Cyclops stretches out his hand. We cannot know what the tablets held that day; whether the Cyclops went home sad or happy; whether before he turned he proudly looked into the calm sea mirror, and "beautiful seemed his beard, beautiful his one eye, and the sea reflected the gleam of his teeth whiter than Parian stone;"[4] or whether in bitterness of heart he cried again, "I know thee, gracious maiden, why it is thou dost shun me. It is all for the shaggy brow that spans all my forehead, from this to the other ear, one long unbroken eyebrow. And but one eye is on my forehead, and broad is the nose that it overhangs. . . . But if thou dost refuse because my body seems shaggy and rough, well, I have faggots of oak wood, and

[1] "ΔΩΡ. *καὶ αὐτὴ δὲ ἡ πηκτὶς οἵα· κρανίον ἐλάφου γυμνὸν τῶν σαρκῶν, καὶ τὰ μὲν κέρατα πήχεις ὥσπερ ἦσαν, ζυγώσας δὲ αὐτὰ καὶ ἐνάψας τὰ νεῦρα οὐδὲ κόλλοπι περιστρέψας ἐμελῴδει ἄμουσόν τι καὶ ἀπῳδόν, ἄλλο μὲν αὐτὸς βοῶν ἄλλο δὲ ἡ λύρα ὑπήχει, ὥστε οὐδὲ κατέχειν τὸν γέλωτα ἐδυνάμεθα ἐπὶ τῷ ἐρωτικῷ ἐκείνῳ ἄσματι.*"

[2] This very messenger, we learn from another and an earlier poet than Theokritus, had been sent by Polyphemus. See Schol. *Theok.* xi. 1.

"*Φιλόξενος ποιεῖ τὸν Κύκλωπα καταμυθούμενον ἑαυτὸν ἐπὶ τῷ τῆς Γαλατείας ἔρωτι καὶ ἐντελλόμενον τοῖς δελφῖσιν ὅπως ἀγγείλωσιν αὐτῇ ὅπως ταῖς Μούσαις τὸν Ερωτα ἀκεῖται.*"

Of the poem of Philoxenus, we have, unhappily, only a few bare fragments; enough, though, to make us guess how much Theokritus may have been indebted.

[3] Cf. Ovid. *Amor.* i. 12—

"flete meos casus, tristes rediere *tabellæ*."

[4] "*καὶ γὰρ πρὰν ἐς πόντον ἐσέβλεπον, ἦς δὲ γαλάνα,*
καὶ καλὰ μὲν τὰ γένεια καλὰ δ' ἐμὶν ἁ μία κώρα
ὡς παρ' ἐμίν κέκριται κατεφαίνετο, τῶν δέ τ'ὀδόντων,
λευκοτέραν αὐγὰν Παρίας ὑπέφαινε λίθοιο."—THEOK. *Id.* vi. 35.

Pl. 13.

beneath the ashes is fire unwearied, and I would endure to let thee burn my very soul, and this my one eye, the dearest thing that is mine." [1]

Whatever the tablets may have brought, they did not bring content. The maiden will not come ashore; she cares nothing for the laurels, the dun ivy, the sweet clustered grapes. And so the giant's longing grows; a mad hope bestirs him; he will even leave his lovely cave and seek her through the unknown treacherous waters. "Ah me!" he cries, "that my mother bore me not a finny thing; so would I have gone down to thee and kissed thy hand, if thy lips thou would not suffer me to kiss." "Now verily," he quaintly adds, "maiden, now and here will I learn to swim, if perchance some stranger come hither sailing with his ship, that I may see why it is so dear to thee to have thy dwelling in the deep." No *poet* tells us if the giant really plunged into the sea he hated. But let us turn to Plate 16, from a mural painting in the tablinum of the house of Livia, on the Palatine. Here, breast-high amid the waves, we see the faithful lover. A little mischievous love has literally *driven* him down from the land, and now holds him with slack rein. The giant is younger than in most of our pictures; his face is soft and smooth; and we remember that Theokritus tells us how he loved Galatea when

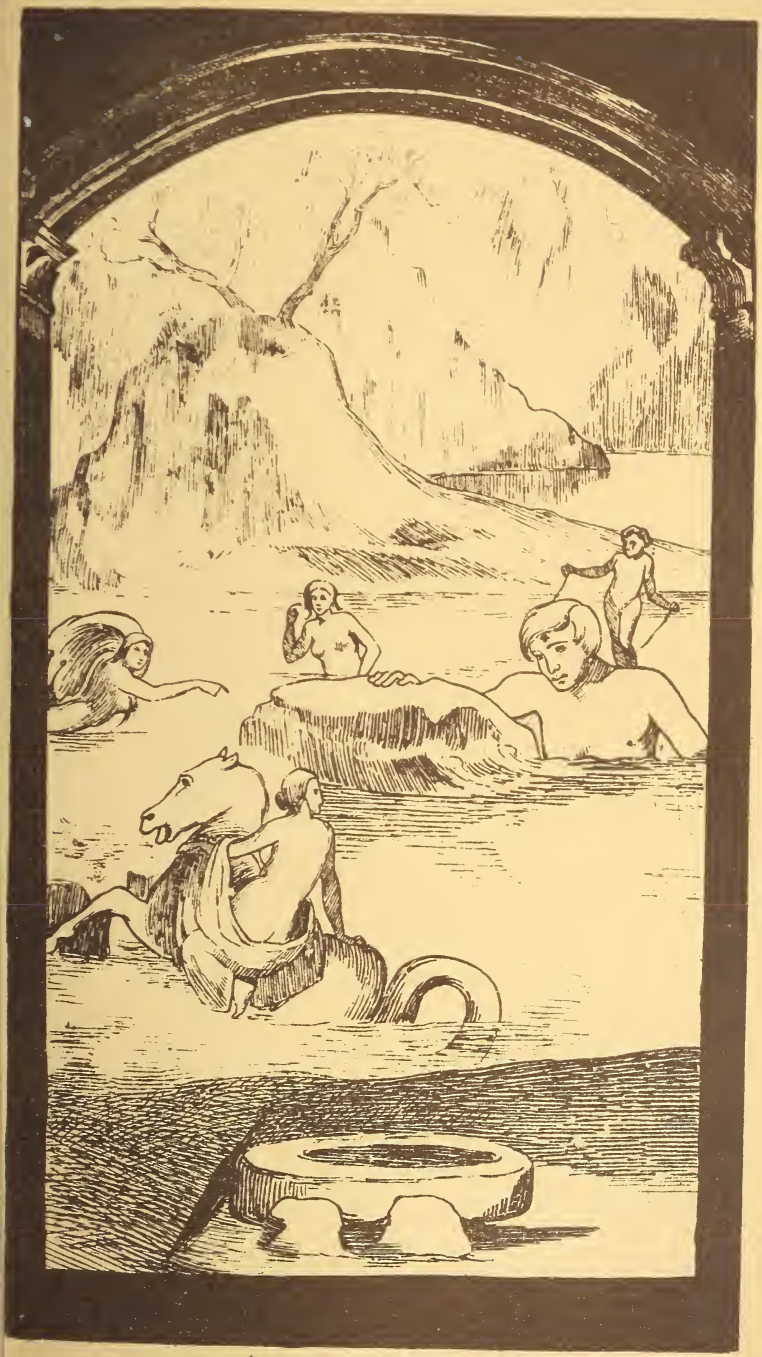
[1] "γινώσκω χαριέσσα κόρα τίνος οὕνεκα φεύγεις·
οὕνεκά μοι λασία μὲν ὀφρὺς ἐπὶ παντὶ μετώπῳ
ἐξ ὠτὸς τέταται ποτὶ θ' ὥτερον ὡς μία μακρά,
εἷς δ' ὀφθαλμὸς ἔπεστι, πλατεῖα δὲ ῥὶς ἐπὶ χείλει.
. . . . . .
αἰ δὲ τοι αὐτὸς ἐγὼν δοκέω λασιώτερος ἦμεν,
ἐντὶ δρυὸς ξύλα μοι καὶ ὑπὸ σποδῷ ἀκάματον πῦρ·
καιόμενος δ' ὑπὸ τεῦς καὶ τὰν ψυχὰν ἀνεχοίμαν
καὶ τὸν ἓν ὀφθαλμὸν τῷ μοι γλυκερώτερον οὐδέν."—*Id.* xi. 30.

"the beard was yet young on his cheek and chin." He crouches behind a rock; he longs to see his love, yet half fears that she should see him. Perhaps she has just caught a glimpse, for she turns round, resting her right hand on the back of her sea-horse. A red drapery falls loosely about her; her left hand grasps the horse's neck. The giant has not yet learned to swim; he stands upright, awkward and helpless, but he seems happy in his venture, for he is nearer to Galatea than he has ever been before. Perhaps he hopes to catch her as she sails round the rock; more likely—for the burly giant was a reverent lover—he hopes that when she sees him for her sake daring the strange water, she will pity his "fatal frenzy," and relent at last.

We cannot know which way Galatea turned her sea-horse, but we feel sure that the Cyclops never learnt the lesson he tried so hard to teach himself. "Milk the ewe that thou hast; why pursue the thing that shuns thee?" He was not the lover to find "another and a fairer Galatea," although "many were the girls that bade him play with them through the night, and softly they all laughed if perchance he answered them." The poets tell us no more, only Propertius hints[1] that all was well at last. But art is kinder. In a Pompeian wall-painting[2] we see the giant leaning against a rock, a huge brown-bearded man. Before him stands a maiden with her face uplifted to his; a bright-coloured drapery is cast over her arm and hip; in her left hand she holds a leaf-shaped fan; her brown hair falls loosely down her back; "love in her eyes sits playing;" but these eyes

[1] "Quin etiam, Polypheme fera Galatea sub Ætna
Ad tua rorantes carmina flexit equos."—PROP. iv. 2, 5.

[2] Preserved at Naples, but in such a mutilated condition that we have attempted no reproduction.



Pl. 16

and all the profile are blurred beyond recall. In the foreground stands the ram; poor ram, no one looks at him now! Even the lyre (this time a syrinx) and the huge club-staff lean neglected for the moment against a tall rock; the staff has been tied by blue ribbons scarcely of the giant's knotting. In the background is the blue sea, but the nymph will go back no more; she "has forgot the way;" she will ride never again upon the dolphin, with the Triton blowing his horn gaily ahead. Nay, rather she will "choose to go a shepherding with her strange love, to milk the flocks, and to pour the sharp rennet in, and fix the cheeses."

Another legend gives a sadder ending—how Galatea loved the river god Acis, and the jealous Cyclops crushed him beneath a mighty rock. But this cruel version arose in later days when Polyphemus was rationalised into Mount Ætna, who slays the streams with ruthless lava as they flow to seek the sea nymphs; so we may leave Galatea in peace, safe under the guardianship of her kind, big shepherd.

The story is so lovely, its art monuments so graceful, that we scarcely like to say a word that may seem like thankless criticism of Alexandrian thought and art. Still we feel that Theokritus and the Hellenistic artists have dared a perilous thing; the monster cannibal was never meant for a lovesick wooer. A robuster age would not have attempted the transformation. It has succeeded, thanks to their delicate touch; but failure and the ridiculous were dangerously near. As it is, the picture is not wholly congruous. Polyphemus, it is true, is dignified throughout, with just a thought of added courtliness—shall we say chivalry?—when he is fain to "kiss the hand" of his mis-

tress; and the morbid culture of Alexandria has not sapped his manhood; his love is nowise artificial; when

> "a Cyclop pines
> 'Tis not his wont to woo with valentines,
> But with distraction." [1]

But the lady on the dolphin in the gay yellow garment, with the parasol held above her head, is somewhat *too* courtly; we are almost sorry that the great-hearted giant should fiercely love a thing so slight. And Eros, the great and awful god, how changed he is since the days when Praxiteles fashioned him—to what base uses has he come!—to bear a lady's sunshade or carry her *billets doux*. We can well believe that in days such as these Homer was little read and less reverenced. In fashionable circles even the dramatists must have seemed too severely simple; perhaps no one mentioned it, but they were felt to be just a trifle out of date. So on the walls of Pompeii we miss, for the most part, myths from Trojan and Theban cycles. We miss also any trace of deep religious conviction; the gods are always in love, not often seriously. There is much of situation, little of action, much that is minutely descriptive to the eye, little that is narrative. So it was, no doubt, with the lost frescoes in Alexandrian houses. The delicate, highly sensuous critic might possibly collect as "old china" such designs as the cylyx and oinochoes we have figured in Plates 4 and 6; but the walls of the artistic dwelling-place more common-place citizen had just built himself would be decorated with softer scenes, with a frieze of "mythological genre pictures"[2] whose sentiment was his own by more than

[1] From an unpublished translation of Idyll xi., kindly lent to me by the author, Mr. R. Garnett.

[2] Brunn, *Die Bukoliker und die bildende Kunst.*

historical sympathy.[1] Much that we feel to be in doubtful taste, if not actually incongruous, was to him fresh and suggestive; *we* may wonder to see Polyphemus, the great sea god, sitting on the shore of a sort of inland lake surrounded by much landscape gardening, and tier upon tier of delicate temple-like structures; but, to the Pompeian, landscape painting at all was a new delight and perspective a wonder, and, like all fashionable wonders, welcome everywhere. *We* may now grieve over the fallen love-god; but if Eros with the parasol were the last new thing in art, we should call it a quaint conceit, and hang it, like the Pompeian, in our favourite boudoir. Our own age is least of all the age which can turn with contempt from a Pompeian wall-painting.

These paintings have also a special interest, because their relation with contemporary literature is close beyond that of any former age. Sculptors and vase-painters no doubt drew their subjects and something of their inspiration from epic poets and tragedians, with what freedom we have seen; rarely, if ever, does a dramatist seek in return inspiration from a work of art. In the Alexandrian days not only were art and literature contemporary in approximate stages of development—a thing unknown before; but art paid back its long-standing debt to literature, and became in turn a source of inspiration. Poets begin to deal in detailed description; they paint minutiæ instead of boldly sketching the old clear outlines. They begin consciously to seek after highly coloured effects and elaborate decoration, such as they saw daily

[1] That a taste for collecting or imitating the antique prevailed we have actual proof. Some of the paintings recently excavated in the gardens of the Farnesina Palace are copies of early Athenian designs, if not the originals cut out and let into the walls.

around. So art and literature, mythology and mythography, act and react upon each other in ever-recurring waves of graceful decadence. How far this tide had ebbed we may best see by placing side by side the cylix in Plate 4 and the painting in Plate 15. The mere juxtaposition is enough; and we thank the Cyclops for living on from age to age to tell us in person a story so strange.

II

THE MYTH OF THE LÆSTRYGONES

FORTY years ago, had we been dealing with the art monuments of the Odyssey, we must have passed in silence by this strange cannibal pirate folk. No statue, no frieze, no vase, no gem, no Pompeian wall-painting, has, so far as we know, left us any portrayal of them and their cruel deeds. They are a people no uncouther than the Cyclopes, yet early art rejected them. But in the year A.D. 1848, during some excavations on the Esquiline Hill, there came to light a series of wall frescoes dealing exclusively with Odyssey landscapes. In four out of the seven pictures preserved to us we meet at last the loathly monsters, depicted in no harsh outlines, but, as if Fate were ironical, with all the soft surroundings of rich colouring and dim distance.

Since this discovery the "strong Læstrygons" have acquired a fresh prestige. They are no longer to us the somewhat feeble echo of the Polyphemus tribe, nor is the adventure of Odysseus in their land any more a mere slight episode apt to be confused and misplaced. They themselves obtain a new prominence, and most of all their "fair haven," with, on either side, its "jutting headlands," becomes for all time the ideal landscape of the ancient world.

But we must not anticipate. Before we turn to any

general considerations as to the nature of the myth and the special character of the art which has chosen it for presentation, let us hear the Homeric story, and study in order our four pictures as they follow each other in close sequence.

Through the folly of his comrades, who opened the wallet of Æolus, Odysseus is driven helplessly on at the mercy of contrary winds and waves.

"And the spirit of the men was spent beneath the grievous rowing by reason of our vain endeavour, for there was no more any sign of a wafting wind. So for the space of six days we sailed by night and day continually, and on the seventh we came to the steep stronghold of Lamos, Telepylos of the Læstrygons, where herdsman hails herdsman as he drives in his flock, and the other who drives forth answers the call. There might a sleepless man have earned a double wage, the one as neatherd, the other shepherding white flocks; so near are the outgoings of the night and of the day. Thither when we had come to the fair haven, whereabout on both sides goes one steep cliff unbroken, and jutting headlands over against each other stretch forth at the mouth of the harbour, and strait is the entrance, thereinto all the others steered their curved ships. Now the vessels were bound within the hollow harbour, each hard by other, for no wave ever swelled within it, great or small, but there was a bright calm all around. But I alone moored my dark ship without the harbour, at the uttermost point thereof, and made fast the hawser to a rock. And I went up a craggy hill, a place of outlook, and stood thereon; thence there was no sign of the labour of men or oxen, only we saw the smoke curling upward from the land. Then I sent forth certain of my company to go and search out what

manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, choosing out two of my company and sending a third with them as herald. Now, when they had gone ashore they went along a level road, whereby wains were wont to draw down wood from the high hills to the town. And without the town they fell in with a damsel drawing water, the noble daughter of Læstrygonian Antiphates. She had come down to the clear-flowing spring Artacia, for thence it was custom to draw water to the town. So they stood by her and spake unto her, and asked who was king of that land, and who they were he ruled over."[1]

This is the moment the Augustan wall-painter has chosen for the first of his Læstrygon series (figured in Autotype I.) For a full view of the fair haven and the jutting headlands we must wait till our third picture. At present we have to the left just a glimpse of the blue sea and the "hollow harbour," and assuredly there is a bright calm all around; only the steep yellow rocks tell beforehand of an inhospitable coast. Within the harbour the ships, with their double rows of oars, are made fast; all, we may suppose, but the ship of the prudent Odysseus, who tarries without. Over these ships still hover the figures of the wind-gods, let loose from the wallet of Æolus; this links our picture to the last adventure; probably some storm scene was figured in the next preceding painting, now lost. The winds are represented as winged and as complete figures; they seem to be in motion, and are blowing on trumpet-like instruments. Their stormy character is well seen both in their attitudes and their doubtful gray tints.

Still to the left, close to the beach and beneath a steep

[1] *Od.* x. 80-110.

rock, is figured a high-beaked boat. In it a brown-hued boatman, with petasos and chiton; he is in the act of putting off from the shore. It is well that beside him is written "Coast" (AKTAI), or much curious mythology would doubtless have been woven together to provide him with a personality. He has no connection with the action of the scene; his sole function is to indicate the *locale*. The painter in ancient days, new to the task of depicting landscape, mistrusted his powers of realism, and fearing to be misunderstood, resorted to the old plan of idealism. He wishes to portray the coast; lest any one mistake his meaning, he adds to his realistic painted beach a speaking symbol, not a shore god, but the coast itself, idealised, personified. This figure to our eyes, habituated to modern artistic usage, is no help; but the Greek mind, accustomed to this quaint symbolism, would at once seize its meaning. The ancient sculptor, unable and unwilling to attempt landscape, if he wishes to indicate Attica as the locale of his subject, fashions a nymph Attica, and places her recumbent at the base of his design; or possibly even, as she merely denotes the ground, allows her to be trampled beneath the feet of men and horses. The painter only slowly dared to desert the traditions of sculpture. In our Odyssey pictures we have a very charming transition stage; the landscape is successfully treated from the realistic point of view, and yet the ideal figure symbols are there to give it an old-world life. There is a human warmth about the scene which our modern god-deserted landscapes lack. Near to this personified AKTAI is a figure of similar intent, a nymph reclining at the foot of a tall rock. She wears a light brown mantle, with a green girdle and a yellow drapery thrown across her

I.

knee. She is ΚΡΗΝΗ, the spring; she lies at ease with that careless flowing grace characteristic in Greek art of the water god or goddess. Below her is her spring, the clear-flowing Artakia; the realistic presentation is again added to the ideal symbol. To the right, high up on the precipice, is a third recumbent figure; he is not inscribed, but there is no doubt that he is the personified mountain-steep. His right hand is raised over his head; his whole posture is full of sublime unconcern. These personified mountain figures occur not unfrequently on Campanian wall-paintings. To the extreme right a herdsman is hurrying away; his oxen follow him somewhat tumultuously. He serves to point out the pastoral nature of the scene—another possible signification we will consider when we come to the second picture.

Such is the surrounding scene; it remains to identify the figures of the principal actors. Down a very steep path from the "stronghold of Lamos" we see approaching the "noble daughter of Læstrygonian Antiphates." She wears a blue gray robe, a peplos draped around her. Opposite her, and of much smaller stature (for she is a giant's daughter,) are the three messengers of Odysseus. In Homer they are nameless. But the painter is more personal, and has carefully noted their identity—Archilochus, Anchialos, Eurybates.[1] Curiously enough, though the text says nothing of these three in this special connection, we

[1] For Eurybates, see *Il.* ii. 184:—

"τὴν δὲ κόμισσεν
κῆρυξ Εὐρυβάτης Ἰθακήσιος." . . .

The herald of Agamemnon, however, was also called Eurybates, so the name may have had some professional connotation.

For Anchialos, see *Od.* i. 180:—

"Μέντης Ἀγχιάλοιο δαΐφρονος εὔχομαι εἶναι."

For Archilochus, see Tsetzes, *Chil.* x. 360, on verse 891.

know from another source that Eurybates was actually the herald of Odysseus, and that Archilochus and Anchialos were closely connected with the hero. Either the painter added these three probable messengers from his own fancy, or some other poem handed them down as traditional emissaries. All three wear short chitons, red coloured, with a bright light chlamys and white petasos. The foremost has a spear in his left hand; he lifts his right as if about to address the king's daughter, and seems prepared to mount the hill. Plainly he is the spokesman of the party; the other two wait quietly behind. The middle one carries two spears, the hindmost is unarmed. Had they been uninscribed, we might have supposed the foremost to be Eurybates, the herald; but clearly he is not. Eurybates follows last, unarmed as becomes a herald. Curiously enough, though it may be a mere coincidence, this hindmost figure is much bent; and we learn from another book of the Odyssey that Eurybates, besides being "brown-skinned" and "curly-haired," was "round-shouldered."[1] Early art would probably have scorned to represent a mere accidental peculiarity, but the scholiast spirit of later days delighted in details. The level road along which the three messengers go is very clearly indicated, and comes out in striking contrast to the almost impossible precipice down which the maiden appears to have descended.

We must advance a step farther in the story before we turn to our second picture. The messengers have asked her of the land and its rulers.

[1] "καὶ μὲν οἱ κῆρυξ ὀλίγον προγενέστερος αὐτοῦ
εἵπετο, καὶ τὸν τοι μυθήσομαι οἷος ἔην περ·
γυρὸς ἐν ὤμοισιν μελανόχροος οὐλοκάρηνος
Εὐρυβάτης δ' ὄνομα ἔσκε."—*Od.* xix. 244-247.

II.

"Then at once she showed them the high-roofed hall of her father. Now when they had entered the renowned house they found his wife therein. She was huge of bulk as a mountain peak, and was loathly in their sight. Straightway she called the renowned Antiphates, her lord, from the assembly-place, and he contrived a pitiful destruction for my men. Forthwith he clutched up one of my company and made ready his mid-day meal, but the other twain sprang up and came in flight to the ships. Then he raised the war-cry through the town, and the valiant Læstrygons at the sound thereof flocked together from every side, a host past number, not like men, but like the giants." [1]

This scene, the muster of the giant-host, is depicted in the second picture (Autotype II.), but we must first notice how closely the two are connected. If we place the second picture immediately to the right of the first (as in Autotype IV. B.), we shall see that not only the subject, but the actual lines are continuous; the water of the spring Artakia flows on behind the intercepting decorative pillar; the gray violet tint is uninterrupted; the sheep still cluster round the pool. These sheep we may now take in connection with the oxen in Autotype I., as they belong in sentiment rather to the peaceful meeting-scene than to the turbulent gathering. Unfortunately the painting is in this part very indistinct. The herdsman, however, stands out quite clearly; he seems to be mounting the hill, and about to drive his sheep before him through the wide portals of "big-gated Lamos," dimly visible in the distance. It has been conjectured that here we have the "herdsman who shepherds white flocks," and who "drives *in* his herd" at early morn;

[1] *Od.* x. 111-121.

whereas to the right of the first picture we have the neatherd with his attendant oxen, who rush *out* eagerly to their morning pasture. Such an interpretation we should have rejected at once in an earlier work of art; but it is not out of harmony with the realism of Augustan days; throughout the Læstrygonian pictures the text of Homer is very closely followed, and the juxtaposition of neatherd and shepherd is so emphasised by the poet,[1] that it would scarcely be omitted by the painter.

The intention of the scene to the left is markedly pastoral. Close to the herdsman in the second picture, seated beneath a tree by the stream, are figures inscribed NOMAI, pastures personified, as are the spring and the coast in the first scene. Only one of the figures is very clearly made out; that of a woman, her right hand raised to her head, as if in meditation. The prominent man's figure seated near her has satyr horns and sandals with thongs; in his right hand a pedum; a rich brown, gleaming drapery is thrown over his left shoulder. He looks calmly on at the uproar to his right. Exactly who he is is not clear, but his attributes and careless attitude rank him as some rural impersonation.

Let us turn to the main subject of the picture. The scene in the palace is spared us; our eyes are not to be offended by the sight of the "loathly" wife, and a veil is drawn over the horrid "mid-day meal." The giant has just raised his war cry. To the right of the picture he descends the hill, above him his name is clearly written, ΑΝΤΙΦΑΤΗΣ. He strides hurriedly on, in his left hand he

[1] "Τηλέπυλον Λαιστρυγονίην, ὅθι ποιμένα ποιμὴν
ἠπύει εἰσελάων ὁ δέ τ' ἐξελάων ὑπακούει."—*Od.* x. 82-83.

III.

holds a spear, his right is raised in command. A white drapery is thrown round his waist. The foreground figures do not need their inscription, they are obviously ΛΑΙΣΤΡΥΓΟΝΕΣ. Some are naked, some slightly clothed with skins. One of the number is tearing at a tree, eager to break off the trunk for a club; another to the front of him runs off in answer to his lord's war-cry, a spear in his left hand, an uncertain object, possibly a stone, in his right; a third is engaged in heaving up a huge rock. Quite to the right, where the transition to the next scene has already set in, is a fourth; he has seized two pigmy Greeks,—one he casts over his shoulder, the other he drags behind him. The figures of the Greeks serve well to show the giant bulk of the Læstrygonian; he evidently drags off his booty up the hill for a prospective "mid-day meal." Again, still farther to the right, a fifth Læstrygonian has caught a Greek, and is slaying him in the water; higher up the hill a sixth is hurrying out from behind a cliff; and dimly in the distance several others are busy breaking off rocks and hurling them down. Throughout, the variety of motive in the different figures, and the contrast between the pastoral peace of the left hand scene and the tumult of the right, is finely conceived and full of that transitional spirit which is the proper and peculiar characteristic of painting.

By no abrupt transition we pass to the scene in the third picture (figured in Autotype III.), the outcome of the second. The "host past number" of the giants has mustered, and the fray is in mid-action. "They cast at us from the cliffs with great rocks, each of them a man's burden, and anon there arose from the fleet an evil din of men dying and ships

shattered withal. And like folk spearing fishes they bare home their hideous meal." [1] Such is the dreadful scene which has for its setting our loveliest landscape. The sweeping curve of the "fair haven" is full in sight; in the distance are the "jutting headlands over against each other," and the entrance we see is "strait." For all the ruin and havoc, there is still a "bright calm" in the blue sea. In this picture, so full of life and glow, we have no inscriptions, no personifications; and we need none. The artist has dared to trust outline and colour for once, and they do not betray him. In the centre two mighty Læstrygonians stand with their backs turned; they are about to cast down huge boulders on the helpless ships. In vain the Greeks uprear their pigmy shields. To the right a giant is pulling in a wrecked ship, another goes on hurling stones. We notice to the left how well the size of the Læstrygonians is emphasised; a giant strides only knee-deep through the water, while the hapless Greeks struggle to keep their heads up, swimming feebly. The bay is filled with shattered ships and giant wreckers, and all around, high up among the mountains, scattered Læstrygonians are hurling down rocks on the still untouched boats in the distance. No more lively picture of a sea fight can be conceived; the whole bay is aglow with action, and everywhere the relentless fury of the giants finely contrasts with the helpless ruin of the wrecks.

We must turn to our fourth picture (in Autotype IV.), to hear the last notes of the fierce discord, and watch its modulation to a close of the softest harmony. There is no pause in the landscape or the action from the third to the fourth picture. The coast to the left in the

[1] *Od.* x. 121-123.

IV.

fourth picture is still Læstrygonian. A mighty naked giant standing in the foreground holds in both hands a huge boulder; he is about to let it fall on a tiny Greek, who grovels on the ground before him, holding out his piteous supplicating hands. Behind the Læstrygonian rocks emerges a ship in full sail, inscribed ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ, and we remember how he has told us,—"While as yet they were slaying my friends within the deep harbour, I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and with it cut the hawsers of my dark-prowed ship. Quickly then I called to my company and bade them dash in with the oars, that we might clean escape this evil plight. And all with one accord they tossed the sea water with the oar-blade, in dread of death, and to my delight my bark flew forth to the high seas away from the beetling rocks; but those other ships were lost there, one and all." [1]

But to the right there is another land towards which Odysseus is steering; instead of steep beetling cliffs, a soft undulating coast-line and dim gray-green tints, which lure us on to follow. Three maiden figures seated by the shore would fain beguile us to ask their name and country; faintly outlined forms that climb the hills invite us to explore with them this strange new land; but a duty unperformed lies behind us, and we must retrace our steps.

We have considered the four pictures separately for purposes of detail; let us now place them mentally in close juxtaposition (as in Autotype IV. B.), and note how much artistically they gain by uninterrupted sequence. For decorative purposes they are divided by pillars coloured deep crimson, but their character and purport is still that of a continuous

[1] *Od.* x. 125-134.

frieze. Pictures one, two, and three in reality form only two scenes; the first scene is bounded by the two steep yellow rocks occurring respectively in the first and second picture. Of this first scene the quiet spring of Artakia, and the pool with the cattle, forms the real centre; it is essentially pastoral. The second scene begins to the right of the steep yellow rock in picture two, and includes the whole circle of the bay in the third picture and a part of the fourth. Its subject is one and complete—the havoc of the Læstrygonians. The left hand portion of the fourth picture, which we have put aside for the present, belongs to the scene which is to follow. Considered as separate fragments, we see how much the unity of the first and second picture is marred, for in each the scene is harshly interrupted by the steep dividing rock. This arrangement of the scenes, this overlapping from picture to picture, is very skilful. Were we harshly stopped in thought as well as in vision by each intercepting pillar, we should have no sense of consecution in the frieze. As it is, the coloured bars mark indeed the rhythm of recurring feet, but our eye rests contented at the halting points of rightly placed cæsuras.

Now that we have made acquaintance with these pictures separately and in succession, we turn the better prepared to questions of their date and style. The whole series decorated the peristyle of a large private house on the Esquiline Hill. From the character of the architecture of the house it is supposed that the date of the paintings falls somewhere in the last years of the Republic or the beginning of the Empire. The letters of the inscriptions accord with this date; we have sigma Σ, and epsilon E, omega Ω, forms which occur during the period of the

IV B

early Empire. A passage from Vitruvius (writing between the time of Julius Cæsar and the battle of Actium) tells us curiously enough that before his days Odyssey landscapes were fashionable. He bemoans the degeneracy of his own contemporaries, and thus recalls the good old times:—"Galleries from their extended length they decorated with varied landscapes, the representations of particular spots. In these they also painted ports, promontories, coasts of the sea, rivers, fountains, straits, groves, mountains, cattle, shepherds, and sometimes figures representing gods, and stories such as the Trojan battles or the *wanderings of Odysseus over different countries*, and other subjects founded on real history."[1] Vitruvius goes on to lament that such good old-fashioned subjects had been superseded in his own time by flimsy and fantastic conceits. Our pictures might fairly come under the head of the not too explicit "errationes per topia," and the general character of the landscape is such as he describes. We may fairly suppose that we have before us specimens of a style which in his days was on the wane. He speaks indeed of those who executed such designs as "antiqui;" but from the advanced feeling for nature shown by the topics chosen, we are sure they cannot have been of earlier date than Alexandrian times. Our Esquiline wall-paintings may be copies of some noted Alexandrian series lost to us for ever.

[1] "Ambulationes vero propter spatia longitudinis varietatibus topiorum ornarant ab certis locorum proprietatibus imagines exprimentes. Pinguntur enim portus, promontoria, litora, flumina, fontes, euripi, fana, montes, pecora, pastores: nonnullis locis item signantur megalographias habentes deorum simulacra, seu fabularum dispositas explicationes, nec minus Trojanas pugnas seu *Ulixis errationes per topia* ceteraque quæ sunt eorum similibus rationibus ab rerum natura procreata."—*Vit.*, L. vii. cap. 5.

As regards the style, those who have studied the original frescoes incline to the opinion that they are the work not of a great master, but of a skilful copyist. The conception is throughout, as we have seen, exceedingly fine, the execution fluent but somewhat mechanical. We need not be surprised to find at Rome a higher level of taste and skill in the decoration even of a private house than that which meets us in the wall-paintings of a provincial town such as Pompeii. On the whole, the pictures show a surprising sense of aërial perspective, and also of light and shade. The horizon is placed always very much higher than is usual in modern art; this is specially noticeable in the third picture (Autotype III.) Here too we have an example of excellent fore-shortening in the undamaged ship, which hurries away to the assistance of its comrades. In the same scene, however, we have the distant ships of quite disproportionate size; the shading of colour from the deep blue of the foreground to the dim gray of the distance is very good. Throughout this scene the feeling for colour is fresh and vivid; the brown-red flesh colour of the Læstrygonians contrasts most pleasantly with the rich blue water, and the contrast is as true to nature (in countries where sun and air tone and beautify the skin) as it is satisfying to the eye. Gradation of colour is also well seen in the second picture (Autotype II.), where, in the distance, big-gated Lamos is just faintly seen through a haze of dim gray. In picture one (Autotype I.) we notice a natural touch. In the pool to the right the reeds growing round are distinctly and accurately mirrored, and the advancing figures cast very tolerably correct shadows. There are, in fact, traces of such a knowledge of chiaroscuro and perspective as would arise from a rather close observation of

natural phenomena, but would not be sufficiently definite for systematic application. Certainly in this respect these Greek wall-paintings are much in advance of early mediæval art.

Turning from the Læstrygonian pictures to the tribe themselves, we remember that in Roman days they were localised at Formiæ. Horace says he can still be happy though no Formian wine mellows for him in a Læstrygonian jar.[1] Cicero[2] tells his friend that at Formiæ tumult can still rage, though it be political, not cannibal. Many of the adventures of Odysseus were, as we know, localised along the western coast of Italy; but we need not therefore conclude that our landscapes are realistic seaside sketches. The coast about Formiæ bears some general analogy to that which the artist has depicted, but by no means sufficient for identification.

The Læstrygonian myth undergoes no modification; from age to age it remains the simple story of a monstrous, cannibal sea folk. No doubt Greek adventurers, as they coasted cautiously about the Mediterranean shores, met with many barbarian or semi-barbarian tribes, and fared roughly at their hands. The stories they brought home of such adventures would not lose in the telling.

One touch of mystery still hangs over the Læstrygonian race,—a mystery we can scarcely hope wholly to clear away. We remember in the first picture the neatherd with his oxen hurrying forth in the morning, and in the second the shepherd

[1] "Nec Læstrygonia Bacchus in amphora
Languescit mihi.—*Carm.* Lib., iii. 16, 34."

[2] "At hercule in agris non siletur; nec iam ipsi agri regnum vestrum ferre possunt. Si vero in hanc τηλέπυλον veneris Λαιστρυγονίην (Formias dico) qui fremitus hominum! quam irati animi!"—Cic. *ad Att.*, ii. 13.

returning with his sheep; and in connection with these pictures we noted the words, "Telepylos of the Læstrygons, where herdsman hails herdsman as he drives in his flock, and the other who drives forth answers the call." Homer adds the curious comment, "There might a sleepless man have earned a double wage, the one as neatherd, the other shepherding white flocks; so near are the outgoings of the night and of the day."[1] The passage has exercised the ingenuity of commentators[2] from very early times. Most agree in thinking that Homer had heard some strange tale of a northern land where dawn follows close upon sunset. If, as has been conjectured, the floating island of Æolus, with its sheer walls, was suggested by some dim reminiscences of an iceberg,[3] seen by Greek mariners and only half understood, then we cannot wonder if we find a farther trace of polar phenomena. We need not at once proceed to localise the Læstrygonians in Norway or Iceland; they are far enough afield already in a land of fancy which knows of no geography. Homer wanted to tell of a strange people, and he renders his outline the more fantastic by this weird proximity of night and day. His Læstrygonians are a race of herdsmen, as most of his barbarians were; so, with quaint naïvete, he suggests a possible pastoral economy. The

[1] "ἔνθα κ' ἄϋπνος ἀνὴρ δοιοὺς ἐξήρατο μισθούς,
τὸν μὲν βουκολέων τὸν δ' ἄργυφα μῆλα νομεύων·
ἐγγὺς γὰρ νυκτός τε καὶ ἤματός εἰσι κέλευθοι."—*Od.* x. 84-86.

[2] Eustathius gives to Krates the credit of first conjecturing what seems the correct view—

"κατῆρξε δὲ φασι τῆς τοιαύτης μαθηματικῆς ἐπινοίας Κράτης βραχείας ὑποθέμενος τὰς ἐκεῖ νύκτας καὶ εἰπὼν εἶναι τοὺς Λαιστρυγόνας ὑπὸ τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ δράκοντος κατεστερισμένην περὶ αὐτοὺς ἣν καὶ Ἄρατος λέγει ἵσσεσθαι ἠχίπερ ἄκραι μίσγονται δύσιες τε καὶ ἀνάτολαι ἀλλήλησιν."—EUSTATH., 1649.

[3] See *Odyssey* of Homer, W. W. Merry, *ad loc.*

knowledge he had of northern phenomena was probably of the dimmest, but a poet's fancy only asks slight stimulus.

We left our last Læstrygonian consistent to the end, about to crush a helpless Greek; but we must return to the same picture (Autotype IV.), and solve, as far as may be, the mystery of the fair, low-lying, opposite coast. We shall then see how graceful and appropriate is the transition. To the right, on a yellow rock in the foreground, is a group of three female figures. The centre one stands a little behind the others; her outline is very dim. The figure to the left is seated; she is the most charming of the three, with her bright blue garment and red mantle cast about her left shoulder. The third figure, to the right, reclines in a careless, graceful attitude; a dull violet drapery is thrown over her hips, and a veil about her head; her left arm rests on the rock, and she points to the right to something in the distance. Perhaps, if our hopes have been raised very high, we are a little disappointed to learn from the inscription that these three fair maidens are no human actors in the scene to come: they are simply AKTAI, personifications of the lovely coast. Possibly the figure who points to the right indicates that we must look for the future action over beyond the hills, not on the opposite coast. Some shadowy shapes in the distance must also be noted. They are so sketchily worked we can with difficulty make them out. One figure is standing; another, the central one of the three, is recumbent; a third, to the right, evidently mounts the hill. We must seek our clue to the interpretation of these figures in Homer himself. Our painting only tells us that not far away from the Læstrygonians, divided only by a strip of clear blue sea, there

lies another coast-line, scene of another peril. The poet makes scarcely a wider interval in his verse than the painter in his frescoes.

"Thence we sailed outward, stricken in heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions. And we *came to the isle Æœan*, where dwelt Circe. . . . There we put in with our ship into the haven silently, and some god was our guide. Then we stepped ashore, and for two days and two nights lay there consuming our own hearts for weariness and pain. But when now the fair-tressed Dawn had brought the full light of the third day, then did I seize my spear and sharp sword, and quickly departing from the ship I went up into a place of wide prospect, if haply I might see any sign of the labour of men, and hear the sound of their speech. So I went up a craggy hill—a place of outlook."

It is this gentle interlude of two days and two nights, and the dawn of the third morning, that is pictured on our wall-painting. Two of the comrades (their names are not given) are figured tarrying behind; Odysseus climbs the hill. The scene is indicated slightly, but sufficiently, for its character is purely transitional.

If before we have been puzzled to remember the order of the adventures of Odysseus, three at least of them will be for ever fixed in our minds in clear sequence. We shall see the wind gods hover over the harbour of the Læstrygonians in our first picture; and in our last can we forget that, opposite the rude cannibal coast, stretches the fair shore of Circe? Her palace we shall see hereafter; the coast-nymph is pointing inland, and thither we must follow.

III

THE MYTH OF CIRCE

MANY nations, scattered far and wide, have told the tale of the witch-woman who dwelt in a wood,—how she turned men to beasts by her magic. Only the Greek poet has availed to soften the repulsive features of the story, and lend to the evil enchantress the grace and dignity of a mighty and beautiful goddess. It is perhaps in the treatment of such folk-lore as this,—the common *stock* at least, if not the common *heritage* of many peoples,—that the unique genius of the Greek is most clearly seen. What he touches he transfigures. Compared with the versions of other story-tellers his tale is more human, and therefore more pathetic—more real by the definiteness of its outline, more ideal through the elimination of all trivial, accidental detail; nor is it the less profitable because its moral purpose is instinctive and unconscious.

After dire perils among the Cyclopes, after rough battling with the winds from the wallet of Æolus, after cruel mishap at the hands of the Læstrygones, Odysseus and his comrades sail on, stricken at heart, and they come "to the isle Ææan, where dwelt Circe of the braided tresses, an awful goddess of mortal speech, own sister to the wizard Æetes. Both were begotten by Helios, who gives light to

all men, and their mother was Perse, daughter of Oceanus." The mariners put in silently to shore. At early dawn Odysseus (as we saw in a former chapter), with spear and sword, climbs a high hill to reconnoitre.[1] Through the thick coppice he sees the smoke of a dwelling; he goes back to his comrades, bearing with him a tall antlered stag which the gods send in his way. He tells them of the smoke he has seen rising from the palace of the goddess; but even after they have "feasted gloriously," their spirit is still broken within them by their past sorrows, and none are for going. They cast lots, and the lot falls on Eurylochus to lead his band. With him go twenty-two of his fellows, all weeping. "In the forest glades they found the halls of Circe, builded of polished stone, in a place with wide prospect." Later on, we shall see these halls of polished stone, these forest glades and their clear prospect; but early art cared more for the human actors than the scene in which they played their part; and for the time we will follow its guidance. "All around the palace mountain-bred wolves and lions were roaming, whom she herself had bewitched with evil drugs that she gave them. Yet the beasts did not set on my men, but lo, they ramped about them and fawned on them, wagging their long tails! And as when dogs fawn about their lord when he comes from the feast — for he always brings them the fragments that soothe their mood—even so the strong-clawed wolves and the lions fawned around them; but they were affrighted when they saw the

[1] Just so Æneas (*Æn.* i. 180 *seq.*) climbed a high hill to view the fair land of Libyan Dido. In place of one "tall antlered stag" of Odysseus, Æneas slays seven; but for all this more abundant cheer his comrades somehow do not seem to feast so "gloriously."

a

b

Pl. 17.

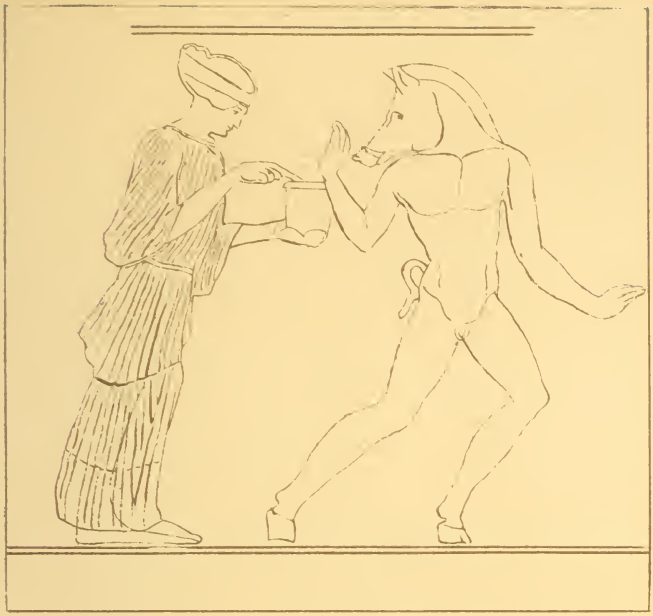
strange and terrible creatures. So they stood at the outer gate of the fair-tressed goddess, and within they heard Circe singing in a sweet voice, as she fared to and fro before the great web imperishable, such as is the handiwork of goddesses, fine of woof and full of grace and splendour."

They cry aloud to her, and "straightway she came forth and opened the shining doors and bade them in, and all went with her in their heedlessness. But Eurylochus tarried behind, for he guessed there was some treason." Of this introductory scene, the arrival of the comrades, we have a curious presentation in Plate 17*a*. The design is from an amphora found at Vulci, now in the Parma Museum. Both the obverse and reverse have reference to the myth of Circe. The obverse we shall consider later. On the reverse, figured in Plate 17*a*, are three figures. To the left stands a man, dressed in a belted chiton with short sleeves ornamented with a dark border; he wears a chlamys fastened in the breast by a brooch. His petasos falls back on his neck. The whole dress is that conventionally assigned to the heroic traveller. He carries a spear, and his left hand is raised to indicate that he is talking to the woman opposite him. She is dressed in a long chiton, fastened at the shoulders; her head is adorned by a sort of sphendone; she seems to receive the traveller kindly, and to be speaking to him. By her side is a very noticeable dog; his size alone is quite unusual; his expression still more so. He lifts his head towards the stranger; his mouth is open, but apparently with no evil intent, certainly not barking, for his whole attitude is too quiet; his ears lie back, not pricked with any sudden attention. We have many ancient dogs, but none like this; there is something

of magic about him, and we remember that "all around the palace wolves of the hills and lions were roaming;" and *as when dogs fawn about their lord,* so the strong-clawed wolves and lions fawned around the "dear comrades" of Odysseus. Has the artist by a curious device realised the simile in place of the fact? Did he bethink him that a friendly wolf would be difficult of presentation, and substitute for him the dog to whom he was likened? It was about the *comrades* of Odysseus that the strange creatures thronged, and it is one of these comrades that is here depicted, not Odysseus. Of this we may be almost sure, for on the obverse of the same vase, figured in Plate 17*b*, we have the hero himself, distinguished, as usual in early art, by his superior heroic nakedness. Two moments are combined in the reverse design,—the meeting with the enchanted animals, and that with Circe herself; this is quite in the manner of Greek art.

We must continue the story: "So she led them in and set them upon chairs and high seats, and made them a mess of cheese and barley meal and yellow honey, with Pramnian wine, and mixed harmful drugs with the food to make them utterly forget their own country. Now, when she had given them the cup and they had drunk it off, presently she smote them with a wand, and in the styes of the swine she penned them. So they had the head and voice, the bristles and the shape of swine; but their mind abode even as of old. Thus were they penned there weeping, and Circe flung them acorns, and mast, and fruit of the cornel tree to eat, whereon wallowing swine do always batten."

Such is the first act in the drama, and lovely though the picture of Circe herself is, we feel at once that, for art



a

b

Pl. 18.

presentation, the subject is a difficult one. The Egyptian loved to fashion beast-headed gods; the Greek, if he must depict a hybrid monster, preferred the human head with the beast's body. But the case of the enchanted victims of Circe is a special one; the artist desires above all things to emphasise degradation, and thereby heighten pathos, so the beast-head is preserved. Let us turn to Plate 18*a*, and see how the problem of depicted transformation was solved in the best period of Greek art.[1]

The design is from an amphora found at Nola; the drawing is of peculiar firmness and delicacy. Circe wears a fine full chiton with sleeves, her hair fastened by a band. In her left hand she holds a bowl, and in her right a ladle, with which she stirs the mess of cheese and barley meal and yellow honey and Pramnian wine. From her hastens away one of the comrades of Odysseus; he has drunk of the cup; already the shape of a beast is growing about him. But, as we look, the full pathos of his upraised hand comes upon us; he lifts it as a last protest against the cruel fate he is still man enough keenly to feel; he moves away, but it is too late for escape. The artist surely has remembered Homer's words, "So they had the head and voice, the bristles and the shape of swine, but their mind abode even as of old."[2] When the moment of release comes we know that the

[1] This conception of the mixed beast-man arose doubtless from the necessities of art, and was thence transferred to literature. Homer's men are transformed to natural swine: those of Apollonius Rhodius to hybrid monsters:—

"Θῆρες δ' οὐ θήρεσσιν ἐοικότες ὠμηστῆσιν
οὐ δὲ μὲν οὐδ' ἀνδρεσσιν ὁμόν δέμας ἄλλο δ' ἐπ' ἄλλων
συμμιγέες μελέων."—Apoll. Rhod. iv. 670.

[2] "οἱ δὲ συῶν μὲν ἔχον κεφαλάς φωνήν τε τρίχας τε
καὶ δέμας, αὐτὰρ νοῦς ἦν ἔμπεδος ὡς τὸ πάρος περ."—*Od.* x. 239-240.

strange beast-man will instantly recognise his lord and dear comrades, and "wistful will be the lament that will sink into his soul."

Even finer in conception is the design figured in Plate 18*b*, also from a Nola amphora, now at Berlin. The execution is, however, somewhat careless, though free and graceful. Circe is dressed in a full chiton, with fine folds; her hair is confined by a sphendone. She is seated calmly. In her right hand she holds her wand, in the left a skyphos. On the comrade before her the charm has *just* begun to work; he lifts his hand to his head in piteous protest. The treatment of the situation is on the whole superior to that in Plate 18*a*, because the calm seated posture of the strong enchantress contrasts so dramatically with the helpless tumult expressed in the gesture of her hapless victim. The balance of the figures in Plate 18*a* is more pleasing, but the antithesis is not so pathetic.

Of all our Circe monuments these two are perhaps the most purely conceived and most finely executed. From the conditions of the subject there is in some of the designs we must study a tendency to overcrowd the figures, and in no others is the beauty of the goddess herself so severely simple. Sometimes, too, the moment selected for pourtrayal is when the spell has taken fuller effect, and we miss the pathetic consciousness of degradation. The counterpoise of attitude also in both our Nola designs is very skilful, and the space is filled in a manner peculiarly satisfying to the eye. It is in specimens of ceramography such as these that we feel how to artists of a really great school limitation of space is only a fresh scope for charm of posture and grouping. We feel also how clear and defined must have been the thought

Pl. 19.

which found in outlines such as these its artistic outcome, —how severe the taste which restrained its expression.

For the sake of comparison let us look for a moment at another scene of transformation, and we shall feel more convinced than ever that even if the Greek artist disliked a hybrid monster, he could on occasion turn him to beautiful account. Perhaps nowhere is complete mastery over a difficult subject better seen than the frieze from the Choragic monument of Lysikrates. Dionysos, by the help of his Satyrs, punishes the Tyrrhenian pirates by transforming them into sea-monsters. To give the whole beautiful frieze would be foreign to our purpose, but one of the man-dolphins [1] is figured in Plate 19. He is about to plunge madly into the sea. He is later in date than the examples we give of the monsters of Circe, and may be profitably compared with them.

Similar in style to Plates 18*a* and 18*b*, and with much of the same early simplicity, is the design figured in Plate 20*a*. Authorities differ much as to whether the myth of Circe is here presented, or merely a domestic scene. The question scarcely admits of decision, but in either case the picture affords a graceful comment on the words—"Thus were they penned there weeping, and Circe *flung them acorns and mast and fruit of the cornel tree to eat, whereon wallowing swine do always batten.*" [2] I incline myself to think that the goddess is really intended, because the drapery seems

[1] See the Homeric hymn, vi. 51—

"οἱ δὲ θύραζε κακὸν μόρον ἐξαλύοντες
πάντες ὁμῶς πήδησαν, ἐπεὶ ἴδον, εἰς ἅλα διᾶν
δελφῖνες δ' ἐγένοντο."

[2] "τοῖσι δὲ Κίρκη
παρ' ἄκυλον βάλανόν τ' ἔβαλεν καρπόν τε κρανείης
ἔδμεναι, οἷα σύες χαμαιευνάδες αἰὲν ἔδουσιν."—*Od.* x. 242.

scarcely that of a menial, and because in the period of art to which this vase presumably belongs a mythological motive was preferred. The design is from a small lekythos found at Nocera; the figures are red on black.

In Plate 20*c* is figured the design from a gem now at St. Petersburg, a human figure with a swine's head, one of the comrades of Odysseus. He holds in his hand, supported on his knees, the fatal cup; his attitude is dejected; he too has kept his mind "even as before."

We must pass on to the next scene. Eurylochus goes back to the swift black ship, and bears to Odysseus the tidings of the "unseemly doom" of his comrades. And the hero "casts about his shoulders his sword dight with silver, a great blade of bronze," and slings his bow about him, and leaving the timorous Eurylochus goes forth alone to seek vengeance, "for a strong constraint is laid upon him." On his way through the sacred glades he meets Hermes of the golden wand in the likeness of a young man with the first down on his lip, the time when youth is most gracious. Hermes warns him of danger to come, both from the magic and from the love of Circe, and gives to him a herb of virtue, whereby he may be proof against her charms. "Therewith the slayer of Argos gave me the plant that he had plucked from the ground, and he showed me the growth thereof. It was black at the root, but the flower was like to milk. Moly the gods call it, but it is hard for mortal men to dig. Howbeit, with the gods all things are possible." Engraven on a gem (Plate 20*b*) we may see Odysseus as he goes on his way armed with the herb of virtue. He wears his pointed sailor's cap; in the one hand he holds his "great blade of bronze," in the other he uplifts the moly.

a

b

c

Most nations have their herb of virtue, and, curiously enough, the *Allermannsharnisch* of the Germans is a charm against love as well as magic. Its juice is white, and it has long black bulbous roots. The siegwurz, a kind of gladiolus, was in olden times sacred to Woden, and had similar properties.

"Then Hermes departed toward high Olympos, up through the woodland isle; but as for me I held on my way to the house of Circe, and my heart was darkly troubled as I went. So I halted in the portals of the fair-tressed goddess. There I stood and called aloud, and the goddess heard my voice, who presently came forth and opened the shining doors and bade me in; and I went with her, heavy at heart. So she led me in and set me on a chair with studs of silver, a goodly carven chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And she made me a potion in a golden cup that I might drink, and she also put a charm therein, in the evil counsel of her heart. Now when she had given it, and I had drunk it off and was not bewitched, she smote me with her wand, and spake and hailed me—'Go thy way now to thy stye; couch thee there with the rest of thy company.'

"So spake she, but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh and sprang upon Circe as one eager to slay her. But with a great cry she slipped under and clasped my knees, and bewailing herself, spake to me winged words."

This is the moment, or rather succession of moments, when the action rises to its climax, most frequently chosen for art presentation.

We are fortunate here in being able to compare early and late treatment of the same scene. The design in Plate

21 is from a lekythos now in Berlin; the figures black on red ground, the style early. The vase has suffered considerably from the superposition of a second painting, which had to be washed off before the first could become intelligible. In fact, we have here an instance of the not unfrequent ceramic palimpsest. The groundwork of the design is strewn with the conventional black foliage frequent on vases of early date.

In the middle of the picture sits Circe on a "goodly carven" stool. She is fully draped; a band ties her hair. Her eyes are bent on a cup, the contents of which she seems to be stirring with a kind of twig. Close in front of her stands Odysseus. He wears a sort of short chiton, and a chlamys is cast over both arms. He stands quite quietly. A sword in its scabbard hangs by his side, and apparently he holds a lance under his arm; but the drawing here is not quite clear. Odysseus seems about to grasp the cup; he has not yet drunk. Circe is just putting the charm therein, "in the evil counsel of her heart." The moment for drawing the sword has not yet come. If we grant this to be the motive of the middle group, the action of the comrades becomes very clear and significant. They are not grouped about simply with a view to the picturesque; they take an active part in the impending trial. The comrade farthest to the left, with the ass's head, brays loudly; how else should he utter his sorrowful warning? The next to the left (his head is an uncertain restoration) stretches his hand behind Circe, trying to reach Odysseus. The one to the right nearest the hero plucks him by the elbow. The last, with the swan's head, has sunk on his knees; his long neck droops, his arms are crossed upon his breast. Thus

Pl. 21.

each, according to the capacity left him, expresses his eager alarm for Odysseus, his desire at this critical moment to save his lord from the degradation that has fallen on himself; the two nearest by expressive gesture, the two further ones not by active interference, but in lively utterance of their emotion by voice or posture. This subsidence of feeling towards the extremities of the design, after the manner of pedimental compositions, is very skilful.

In the monuments that follow we advance a step farther. The cup has been drunk; the enchantment has failed; the tension of alarm and excitement is shifted from the comrades to Circe; in wonder and terror she implores for mercy.

For the portrayal of this moment we shall first return to the obverse of our amphora from Vulci, figured in Plate 17*b*, the reverse of which, representing the arrival and friendly reception of the comrades, we have already described. To the left stands Odysseus, naked but for the chlamys thrown over his arm and the sword-belt across his chest. In his right hand is his "great blade of bronze," which he has drawn against the goddess. To the right Circe uplifts her hands in dire amazement. The attitude is stiff and curious, but I can see in it only an attempt to depict terror and wonder after the somewhat clumsy fashion of the Etrurian artist, not, as has been conjectured,[1] a ritual gesture of disenchantment. At the feet of Circe reclines a beast-man comrade, whose presence serves to indicate the scene. He lifts his hand in wonder at the failure of the

[1] Dr. Overbeck (*Gallerie Heroischer Bildwerke*) considers that the design depicts quite a different moment in the story. From his very interesting view I am compelled with the utmost diffidence to dissent.

charm, perhaps in entreaty for help from his lord; he tries to rise, but the beast nature still chains him to the ground. This beast-man found in Etruria does not lack a certain pathos, but he shows ill by comparison with the delicate and graceful monsters of the Magna Græcia vases figured in Plates 18*a* and 18*b*.

Our next art monument, from an Etruscan mirror found at Corneto (Plate 22), is of special interest, because it is inscribed with the names of the persons presented, and thus the intention of the design is undoubted. In the middle sits a woman fully draped, above her head is written "CERCA" backwards in Etruscan characters. On the left stands a man dressed in a chlamys only, his head bare; in his right hand he holds a drawn sword, in the left a rather curiously-shaped scabbard; above him also backwards and in Etruscan characters "VΘSTE;" he threatens Circe; at her feet is a swine, doubtless as an indication of the intended enchantment; close by are two mortars, with pestles for the pounding of "harmful drugs." To the right of Circe is a figure, whose personality, but for the inscription, FELPARVN, no conjecture would have identified. Among the comrades of Odysseus there was one whom he "led not in safety away" from the house of Circe, "Elpenor, the youngest of us all, not very valiant in war, neither steadfast in mind. He was lying apart from the rest of my men on the housetop of Circe's sacred dwelling, very fain of the cool air, as one heavy with wine. Now when he heard the noise of the voices and of the feet of my fellows as they moved to and fro, he leaped up of a sudden and minded him not to descend again by the way of the tall ladder, but fell right down from the roof, and his neck was broken from

PL 22.

the bones of the spine, and his spirit went down to the house of Hades.

It seems strange indeed that this boy, "not very valiant in war," should be singled out to share the great peril of Odysseus when he threatened the enchantress; however, here he is unmistakeably, with a bow in his left hand, an arrow in his right, prepared to draw in case of need; he wears a crested helmet.

The explanation of this presence of Elpenor is due, I think, to more than one artistic motive. A third figure was desired to balance the design; the other two were inscribed, so a name was desired for the third. Eurylochus would have been too glaring a contradiction—only Elpenor remained. Further, he figures prominently in the Circe story,[1] and the artist of those days loved to gather together as much that was suggestive as possible, even at the expense of some lack of literal congruity.[2] It is far from unusual to find persons collected as spectators at a scene which it was impossible they could have actually witnessed. This is one of the many instances which help us to understand the relation between art and poetry in ancient days. Art in the time of its vitality did not stoop to *illustrate* the works of poets. Artists caught, it is true, an inspiration from the poetic garb given to the myth; but they framed their own independent conceptions, and embodied them in such manner as the conditions of their own art suggested. I further believe that the presence of Elpenor may be due to some

[1] "Ἐλπήνωρ δέ τις ἔσκε νεώτατος, οὔτε τι λίην
ἄλκιμος ἐν πολέμῳ οὔτε φρεσὶν ἶσιν ἀρηρώς,"—*Od.* x. 550.

[2] Juvenal also singles out Elpenor, but as victim, not avenger—
"tenui percussum verbere Circes
Et cum remigibus grunisse Elpenora porcis."—*Sat.* xv. 21.

local influence. The mirror is Etruscan; to the Etruscan artist, whose religion abounded in gloomy under-world associations, the figure of Elpenor would, among all the comrades of Odysseus, be of special sanctity and significance. We shall see when we come to consider the myth of the descent into Hades, that when the ghosts flocked about the trench, "first came the ghost of Elpenor, my companion, that had not yet been buried beneath the wide-wayed earth." I offer this suggestion as a possible solution of a much-vexed question.

The design figured in Plate 23 is a late and conscious copy of the Homeric scene. It is from a wall-painting at Pompeii. Odysseus, distinguished by the pilos, draws his sword on Circe; her mouth is wide open; she is uttering the great cry.[1] The nimbus about her head possibly marks her as the daughter of Helios. She is fully draped. Behind is an attendant maiden carrying a vase; another hastens away with a gesture of mingled fright and curiosity. Circe, in amazement that her charm has failed, is about to touch the knees of Odysseus in the conventional attitude of supplication.[2] The foot of the hero still rests on the footstool [3] she had placed for him. The original is brilliantly coloured. Odysseus wears a violet exomis and red chlamys; his pilos is white. Circe has a green chiton, the nimbus over her head is blue. One attendant is in yellow, the other in violet and yellow. There is little of

[1] "ἐγὼ δ' ἄορ ὀξὺ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ
Κίρκῃ ἐπήιξα ὥς τε κτάμεναι μενεαίνων
ἡ δὲ μέγα ἰάχουσα ὑπέδραμε καὶ λάβε γούνων
καὶ μ' ὀλοφυρομένη ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα."

[2] "ὑπέδραμε καὶ λάβε γούνων."

[3] "εἶσε δὲ μ' εἰσαγαγοῦσα ἐπὶ θρόνου ἀργυροήλου,
καλοῦ δαιδαλέου· ὑπὸ δὲ θρῆνυς ποσὶν ἦεν."

Pl. 23.

interest in the picture except its careful fidelity to the Homeric scene. The naïveté of earlier presentations is quite absent, and there is none of the idyllic charm of some of the Pompeian designs.

Our next two monuments are unattractive, but instructive in their variety of treatment. Plate 24*a* is from a relief on a Roman lamp, whose flat ugliness is somewhat redeemed by the graceful design of the two swans on the apex. Circe is clothed in rich drapery, in her left hand a long sceptre or staff.[1] Her hair is luxuriant and crowned by a rayed diadem. She is seated in a "goodly carven chair." The goddess has lost all the dignity of her old severe simplicity, and the apparatus of royalty does little to restore it. Odysseus is clad in the pilos and chlamys; with his left hand he grasps his sheathed sword and nerves himself to meet her imploring look with stern resolution.[2] In the background, looking out from their stable, appear the heads of three beasts, apparently two horses and an ox.

Very similar in motive is the design in Plate 24*b*, from the reverse of a contorniat. A woman clothed in a chiton, and with a rayed crown, falls on her knees before a man. He wears, in addition to chiton and chlamys, a helmet. Over a wall are seen three creatures, half beast, half men. No doubt the artist intended to portray Odysseus and Circe; but an early critic quaintly enough sees in the kneeling woman a Christian martyr about to be thrown to wild beasts which gaze eagerly from the windows of their cage. The martyr is supposed to be wearing, somewhat proleptic-

[1] "ῥάβδῳ πεπληγυῖα."

[2] "ὦ Κίρκη, πῶς γάρ με κέλεαι σοὶ ἤπιον εἶναι;"

ally, her crown of glory. Very possibly the design, occurring as it does on a contorniat (*i.e.* a medal of a special design struck in commemoration of the games), was suggested by some scenic representation of the Circe myth.

Late literature, we know, as well as late art, delighted to trick out the enchantress in regal splendour. Perhaps, as faith in the beauty and goodness of the goddess declined, and belief in her malignant magic increased, men felt instinctively the need of gilding with meretricious decoration a creed no longer in itself pure and lovely. Also, no doubt, learned poets delighted to show their erudition by emphasising the symbols of pedigree. From the head of all the daughters of Helios streams a glory of fire-like rays.[1] When Medea and Jason, sin-laden and sorrowful, came to the island of Circe to seek purification, Circe recognises her erring kinswoman by the halo that plays about her.[2] As time goes on the divine daughters of the sun grow more dazzling, more sensational, more malignant, far less lovely.

We left Circe with her winged words unspoken. She claims Odysseus as the hero of whose coming Hermes of the golden wand had foretold, and bids him put up his sword into his sheath, and thereafter "abide with her, that, meeting in love and sleep, they might trust each the other." But he fears her love as sorely as her magic,

[1] "ἦ ῥα θοῶς ἐπὶ νηᾶ κατήλυθεν ἐκ δ' ἄρα πάντες
θάμβεον εἰσορόωντες, ἀπὸ κρατὸς γὰρ ἔθειραν
πυρσαῖς ἀκτίνεσσιν ἁλίγκιοι ἠώρηντο
στίλβε δὲ καλὰ πρόσωπα, φλογὸς δ' ἀπέλαμπεν ἀϋτμή."

[2] "αὐτίχ' ὅπως ἐνόησεν ἀπ' οὔδεος ὅσσε βαλοῦσαν
πᾶσα γὰρ Ἠελίου γενεὴ ἀρίδηλος ἴδεσθαι
ἦεν, ἐπεὶ βλεφάρων ἀποτηλόθι μαρμαρυγῇσιν
οἷόν τε χρυσέην ἀντώπιον ἴεσαν αἴγλην."—Apoll. Rhod. iv. 724.

a

b

Pl. 24.

and will not consent till she swears a great oath to plan nought else of mischief to his hurt, and straightway she swore as he bade her.

"Now all this while her handmaids busied them in the halls, four maidens that are her serving women in the house. They are born of the wells and of the woods, and of the holy rivers that flow forward into the salt sea. Of these one casts upon the chairs goodly coverlets of purple above, and spread a linen cloth thereunder. And lo, another drew up silver tables to the chairs, and thereon set for them golden baskets. And a third mixed sweet honey-hearted wine in a silver bowl, and set out cups of gold. And a fourth bare water and kindled a great fire beneath the mighty cauldron. So the water waxed warm; but when it boiled in the bright brazen vessel she set me in a bath and bathed me with water from out a great cauldron, pouring it over head and shoulders when she had mixed it to a pleasant warmth, till from my limbs she took away the consuming weariness."

An unkind fate has destroyed for ever the one art monument which dealt, we know, with this lovely picture of the friendship of Circe and her gentle hospitality. Some seventeen centuries ago Pausanias, travelling through the Peloponnese, came to Olympia, and there, in the great temple of Hera, he saw the chest of Cypselus, conspicuous for its beauty and elaborate execution even among that crowd of splendid votive offerings. He gives a detailed description of the subjects wrought in gold, ivory, and wood upon the chest. To most were attached boustrophedon inscriptions telling their meaning, but the uppermost of five rows of subjects bore no inscription; so the intent, he says, "must be

conjectured from the designs." Within a cave a woman is sleeping by the side of a man, and Pausanias interprets them to be Odysseus and Circe, from the number of the attendants and the nature of their occupations; "for," he adds, "they are four in number, and their employments are those that Homer described in his poem."[1] Pausanias, we know, is not a trustworthy guide in these matters—he was himself too much at the mercy of ignorant local cicerones; but here there seems no sufficient ground for doubting his verdict. Critics object that Circe dwelt in a "fair palace," not a cave; but accuracy in the reproduction of details of topography is not to be expected or desired in an artist. It is objected further that the situation is too slight and general, too little emphasised by the Homeric story to have been chosen for art presentation. Here again we must bear in mind that it is just such scenes as this, rural and domestic in character, that the earliest art—the art, indeed of Homer's own days—loved to embody. If we date the chest of Cypselus somewhere about the seventh century before Christ, the tendency to this almost *genre* kind of art — due in the main to Phœnician influence—may not have completely given place to that idealism in mythology which was the outcome of the pure Greek spirit. Once more, the situation was perhaps more central and significant, also more sacred, to the early artist than it is to us. The friendship of Circe was fraught with great issues to Odysseus. By the express

[1] "ἡ δὲ ἀνωτάτω χώρα, πέντε γὰρ ἀριθμόν εἰσι, παρέχεται μὲν ἐπίγραμμα οὐδὲν λείπεται δὲ εἰκάζειν ἐς τὰ ἐπειργασμένα· Εἰσὶν οὖν ἐν σπηλαίῳ γυνὴ καθεύδουσα σὺν ἀνδρὶ ἐπὶ κλίνῃ, καὶ σφᾶς Ὀδυσσέα εἶναι καὶ Κίρκην ἐδοξάζομεν ἀριθμῷ τε τῶν θεραπαινῶν αἵ εἰσι πρὸ τοῦ σπηλαίου, καὶ τοῖς ποιουμένοις ὑπ' αὐτῶν· τεσσαρές τε γὰρ εἰσιν αἱ γυναῖκες, καὶ ἐργάζονται τὰ ἔργα ἃ ἐν τοῖς ἔπεσιν Ὅμηρος εἴρηκε."—PAUSANIAS, v. 19, 7.

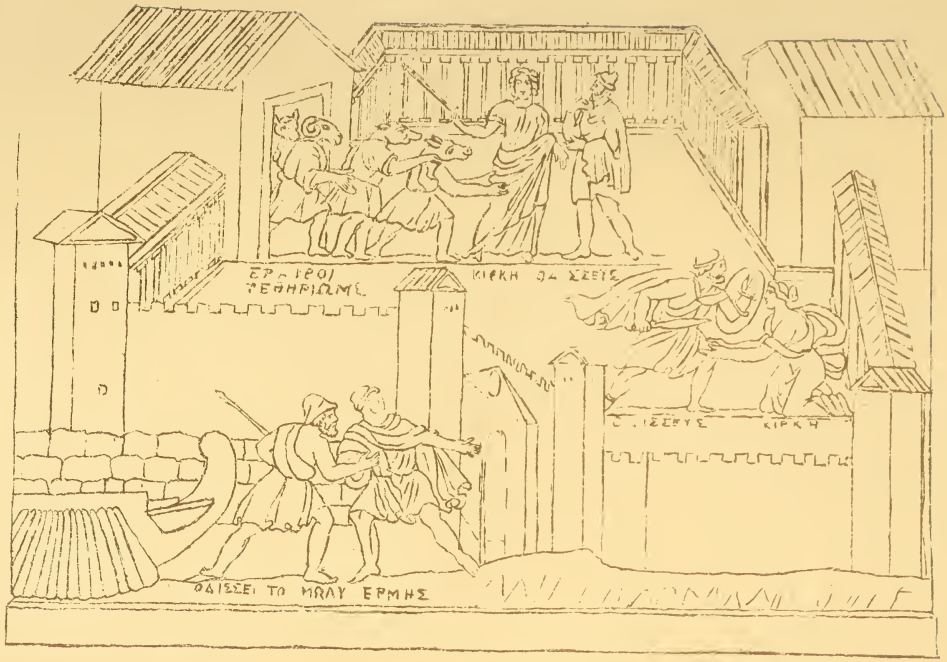
pre-counsel of the gods she was appointed to keep and comfort him, and "take away from heart and limbs consuming weariness and pain." Even her victims when they rise again are goodlier from their fall. It is no evil enchantress who says, "Myself I know of all the pains ye endured upon the teeming deep, and the great despite done you by unkindly men upon the land; nay, come, eat ye meat and drink wine till your spirit shall return to you again. But now are ye wasted and wanting heart, mindful evermore of your sore wandering." The great goddess remembered that the hero was but of mortal frame; she knew, too, that only by union with her strength and wisdom could he bear the strange trial before him. But when the right day comes there is no weak struggle to keep him; we hear of no faint-hearted parting; as Odysseus and his timorous fellows were wending their way to the sea banks "shedding big tears, Circe, meanwhile, had gone her ways and made fast a ram and a black ewe by the dark ship, lightly passing us by; who may behold a god against his will, whether going to or fro?" Such a god might fitly be graven on a sacred chest by the side of the mortal it was her mission to succour.

But we must go back. Odysseus, for all the goodly cheer that is set before him, is ill at ease; and when the goddess asks him the cause of his sorrow he makes answer, "O Circe, what righteous man would have the heart to taste meat and drink ere he had redeemed his company and beheld them face to face? But if in good faith thou biddest me eat and drink, then let them go free, that mine eyes may behold my dear companions.

"So I spake, and Circe passed out through the hall with

the wand in her hand, and opened the doors of the stye and drave them forth in the shape of swine of nine seasons old." This moment, the driving forth of the swine, is depicted in one curious art monument, figured in Plate 25. Art monument we may call it by courtesy, but it is in reality a mere school diagram, a copy of such as were used by the grammar, rhetoric, and poetry teachers of Roman times. The design is from a relief in the palace Rondanini. Three scenes are inscribed in order, though their intent is sufficiently obvious without inscription :—" To Odysseus the moly Hermes " (ΟΔΙΣΣΕΙ ΤΟ ΜΩΛΥ ΕΡΜΗΣ). " Odysseus Kirke " (ΟΔΙΣΣΕΥΣ ΚΙΡΚΗ). " The companions enchanted into beasts " (ΕΤΑΙΡΟΙ ΤΕΘΗΡΙΩΜΕΝΟΙ). Little interest save that of curiosity attaches to this monument, but from its detailed treatment of the various scenes of the myth it could scarcely be omitted. Perhaps art in her most skilful days shrank from depicting with rash finger the consummate beauty of these last pathetic words :—" There they stood before her, and she went through their midst, and anointed each one of them with another charm. And lo, from their limbs the bristles dropped away wherewith the venom had erewhile clothed them, that lady Circe gave them. And they became men again, younger than before they were, and goodlier far, and taller to behold. And they all knew me again, and each one took my hands, and wistful was the lament that sank into their souls, and the roof around rang wondrously. And even the goddess herself was moved with compassion."

Our last art monument of the Homeric story shall not be the diagram of a Roman rhetorician. We have learnt to know in full the human actors, their downfall and their


ΕΡΜΙΟΙ
ΤΕΘΗΡΙΩΜΕ
ΚΙΡΚΗ ΟΔΙΣΣΕΥΣ
ΟΔΙΣΣΕΥΣ ΚΙΡΚΗ
ΟΔΙΣΣΕΙ ΤΟ ΜΡΑΥ ΕΡΜΗΣ

Pl. 25.

uprising; and while the gracious goddess comforts them in body and in soul within her halls, let us tarry outside for a while, and see how the scene of their trial, the goodly palace of Circe, was figured by the fancy of the Græco-Roman wall-painter.

In Autotype V. we have one of the series of Esquiline frescoes which have already furnished us with such abundant comment on the Læstrygonian mishap. To the left, then, we must fancy a peep of blue sea-water—for Circe dwells in an *island* palace—and stretching beyond, gray mountains covered with thicket growth, only dimly indicated. Part only of the palace is in sight, enough to show us that it is "builded of polished stone in a place with a wide prospect." To the right is a sort of crescent structure, the chord of which is formed by a light architrave supported by Doric-Tuscan pillars; between the two middle pillars is seen a door surmounted by a pediment. To the left is a wing of the building, with towers, and a latticed doorway which seems to lead into a court beyond. This forms a sort of side scene. In the front of the palace is a tall high-spreading tree, round its trunk is twisted a tænia. Close to the left hand tower stands the conventional Hermes bust. In front of the chief entrance is a table, with vessels—probably the apparatus of magic—upon it. On either side is a large crater. Beyond the tree we see two curious broom-like objects fastened together at an inclination; they are clearly artificial, and probably indicate in some way the magic character of the palace. Similar objects occur in Campanian wall-paintings.

Two scenes are represented in the one picture, and in both the actors are the same. Such, we know, was frequent

in wall decorations, and the example before us is a striking one, because in both cases the figures are inscribed. Our first scene is described in *Od.* x. 308-313. "But as for me, I held on my way to the house of Circe, and my heart was darkly troubled as I went, and I halted in the portals of the fair-tressed goddess. Then I stood and called aloud, and the goddess heard my voice, who presently came forth and opened the shining doors, and bade me in, and I went with her, heavy at heart." Circe wears a bright blue garment and brown cloak; she raises her hand in welcome; a rayed diadem is on her head. Though a woman she is a goddess, and her stature is loftier than that of Odysseus. Behind her stands, that she may look the more "divinely tall," a small, shadowy maiden, a sort of conventional attendant. Odysseus carries his shield; he is armed, but wears the pilos. We see nothing of the moment when she seats him on the goodly carven chair, nothing of the offering of the cup. The next scene depicted on the right is the entreaty of Circe, already so familiar. Both the goddess and Odysseus have changed the colour of their attire, and a somewhat more majestic maid flies in terror.

The design has far less landscape than the others of the series, and is the only one that contains any architecture. The prevailing tint of the picture is a rather lurid yellow, softened by a dark gray in the more distant parts. The perspective is on the whole good, but in some of the architectural details becomes confused.

There is little doubt that the next in order of these wall-paintings related to the myth of Circe; and when we think that it may have depicted the scene of disenchantment, our regret for its total loss is the bitterer.

Here, in the forest glades, we take leave of the Circe of Homer; but before we pass to the consideration of another and non-Homeric aspect of the goddess, we must note shortly some of the forms that this myth of the witch woman has taken in other lands than Hellas. Maildun, the Keltic Odysseus, in addition to perils at the hands of the Big Blacksmiths (cf. Cyclopes), passes an island of intoxicating wine fruits (cf. Lotophagi), and is detained on a magic island by a beautiful queen, who loves him, and, more like Calypso than Circe, will not suffer him to go. She employs, however, no more baleful charm than a magic thread clue, which draws back her hero's ship. Teutonic nations tell with every variety of detail the story of Jorinda and Joringel—how the maiden is turned into a bird of an ugly old witch, and her lover learns (in a dream instead of by Hermes) the magic herb that is to set her free. More akin perhaps in substance to Homer's story, though far removed in form, is the Indian tale of even earlier date. A young merchant goes forth to seek a Vidyadhari maiden, who has appeared to him in a vision. On the way he meets four pious pilgrims, with whom he joins company. They come to a wood. A woodcutter warns them that a demon dwells there, who will change their shape and devour them. They go on their way, and at midnight the Yakschini appears, dancing and blowing on a flute made of men's bones. As soon as she sees the foremost pilgrim, she fixes her glance on him, and midway in her dance stops to recite the fatal charm. A horn begins to grow from her victim's head, and half-mad he tries to spring into the fire; she catches him, tears him, and eats him. So with the second and the third; she is about to fall on the fourth, but the merchant mean-

time has listened and learnt her charm; he seizes her magic flute, and recites the spell. Powerless she falls on her knees and cries aloud, "Cease only to chant the charm; spare my life; I know all things; I will fulfil all ye desire, and bring you to where the Vidyadhari dwells." The magic herb is missing, but the parallel to the Homeric story is striking. Circe too lives in a wood; she first enchants the comrades of Odysseus, then fails before himself. She too knows all things, and shows him whereby he may fare to his Vidyadhari land, Hades, whither no black ship ever came.

Closer still is a second Eastern parallel, familiar to us in the Arabian collection of tales, the Thousand and One Nights. King Bedr Bâsim, like Odysseus, is seeking to return to his kingdom. He is shipwrecked, and escapes on a plank to an island. A beautiful city is in sight; he desires to go up to it. But as he tries to approach, "there came to him mules and asses and horses, numerous as the grains of sand, and they began to strike him and prevent him from going up from the sea to the land." Later on a sheykh, who plays the part of Hermes, tells him that this is the city of the Enchanters, wherein dwells Queen Lab, an enchantress, who is like to a she-devil. A curious, and, I think, significant fact is, that the Persian word "lab" means sun. We remember that Circe was daughter of Helios. The conceptions of magic and sun-worship seem to have been closely interwoven, and this seems the more natural if the Greek myth were of Eastern origin. The sheykh tells Bedr Bâsim that the strange mules and horses and asses are the lovers of this wicked witch. With each of them she abides forty days, and after that enchants them into beast-

shapes. Queen Lab sees Bedr Bâsim, and falls in love with him. He goes up to her castle, but after some suspicious experiences begins to fear that his appointed day is drawing nigh. His friend the sheykh gives him a magic "saweek." This "saweek," which he is to give to the queen in place of her own magic potion, is the meal of parched barley made into a sort of gruel—thick, but not too thick to drink—a curious parallel to the "mess of cheese and barley meal and yellow honey mixed with Pramnian wine." Queen Lab fares worse for her evil deeds than did Circe. Bedr Bâsim gives her the "saweek," and commands her to become a dappled mule. He then puts a bridle in her mouth and rides her forth from the city, and the sheykh thus addresses her:—"May God, whose name be exalted, abase thee by affliction." Even the Circe of Homer, however, is, we regret to find, in mediæval days made the object of stern retributive justice. Fifteen centuries of Roman legalism have done their work, and laid for morals a new and less goodly, less sure foundation. In the *Orlando Inammorato*, when the Count views the story of "Ulysses and Circella" depicted on a "fair arcade," judgment has fallen even upon the Greek enchantress:—

> "So blinded was she by the passion's heat
> That fired her bosom for this Baron bold,
> That, more deceived by her own deceit,
> Th' enchanted cup she drank of; when, behold,
> Turned to a milk-white hart, her flying feet
> Were snared by huntsman's craft upon the wold." [1]

We cannot avoid noticing how much harsher because more rigid, are the outlines in these Eastern tales and in the Mediæval version. Even where their Circe is beautiful

[1] *Orlando Inam.* xlix. 52; translated for me by Miss E. M. Clarke.

she is made repulsive, through the desire to emphasise her malignant aspect. We are never allowed to doubt or forget for a moment that she is morally vile, and her evil deeds are promptly punished. Homer, in his simple reverence for the goddess, in his tender admiration for the beautiful woman, scarcely raises the question of good or bad. The Greeks were less anxious than either easterns or moderns to point a moral; their praise or blame is, as we so often see, adapted to an ethical standard which is æsthetic rather than judicial. A fatal dualism had not yet sundered for them the divine wedlock of the good and the beautiful; so, in their large human sympathy, they grant to the fair-haired Circe a meed of praise for her loveliness born only of a gentle nature.

So now, having learnt to know the Hellenic Circe, we feel that the Circe of other and less favoured lands may indeed interest by way of antithesis; but, for us, the great type of the enchantress is for ever fixed. No Irish lady, brilliant to charm, but yet too slight to hurt; no ugly Teutonic witch, shapeless and dreary; no cruel malignant demon, surrounded by uncertain Eastern glamour,—none of these; but, in their stead, the clear fixed outline of a mighty goddess, strong to comfort the broken-hearted, to ensnare the foolish, yet beautiful and human; beautiful for her fair hair and clear, sweet voice; human in her sudden, helpless love for the hero who availed to withstand her.

Thus far, our monuments have been strictly Homeric in character, even where details have varied. Had after ages been content to leave the epic Circe as she was, neither art nor literature would have suffered; but early perfection in form pays the inevitable penalty of early degradation and

decay. The story lent itself too easily to allegory to escape the conscious moralist. Apollonius Rhodius, when he revived the epic form, recreated Circe with something of her old godhead, as mistress, however, of the rights of purification,[1] as the stern rebuker of sin; but long before his days the work of destruction was complete—the beautiful myth had been degraded to a moral tale. Sokrates sees in the beast-form only a symbol of greediness.[2] The Stoics find a sermon ready made to hand: Circe is for them the incarnation of beast-like irrationality.[3] Eustathius discovers in the dread daughter of Helios an impersonation of animal appetite.[4] We are ashamed for philosophy when she lays her hand upon poetry. Porphyry says that Homer has expounded in the fable of Circe the mystic *cycle*[5] of metempsychosis—life, death, and resurrection; man lives in human form; he dies and takes the shape of a beast, whereby he is purified and rises to a higher human life. This old-world purgatory—this transmigration of souls—took firm hold on men's imagination. Sokrates, in the Phædo, is made to tell us how, when the souls of men came to the Acherusian lake, they are sent back to be born again as diverse animals.

Of this belief we have a curious art monument

[1] Apoll. Rhod., iv. 666:—

"*τὴν δ' αὐτὴ φονίῳ σβέσεν αἵματι παμφανόωσαν*
χερσὶν ἀφυσσαμένη λῆξεν δ'ὀλοοῖο φόβοιο."

And see iv. 695-715.

[2] Xen. Mem. i. 3-7.

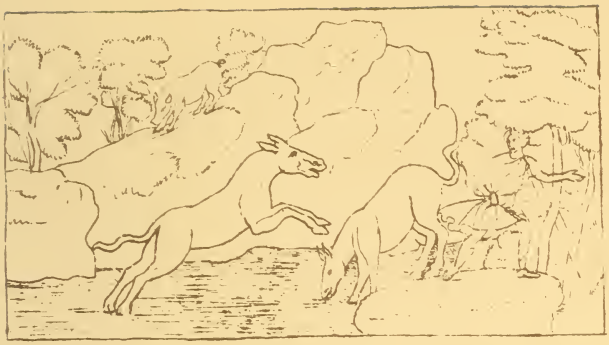
[3] "*ἡ θηριώδης ἀλογία.*"

[4] "*Κίρκη ἡ κατὰ τὰ γευστὰ ἡδονὴ καὶ ἡ ἐκ τρυφῆς κατασάρκωσις, ἧπερ οἱ ἐμπελάσαντες ἐκθηριοῦνται,*" etc.—EUSTATH. *Com. ad Od.* 1656.

[5] "'Ομηρος δὲ *τὴν κύκλῳ περίοδον καὶ περιφορὰν παλιγγενεσίας Κίρκην προσηγόρευκεν, ἡλίου παῖδα, τοῦ πᾶσαν φθορὰν γενέσει, καὶ γένεσιν αὖ πάλιν φθορᾷ συνάπτοντος ἀεὶ καὶ συνείροντος.*"—PORPH. p. 1050.

figured in Plate 26*a*; the design is of very late Roman style, of no interest except to illustrate this point. It is from the tomb of one Quintus Naso, and was discovered in the seventeenth century in the Via Flaminia; it forms part of a series of representations of scenes in the under world. One soul in the form of an ass is drinking the waters of Lethe; a mule which has already drunk is eagerly leaping up ready to return to his new life; a pig soul is contentedly feeding in the distance, his probation apparently not ended. On the bank stands Hermes Psychopompos, unmistakeable because of the caduceus in his hand.

With this doctrine in our minds, let us turn to Plate 26*b*; the design is from an Etruscan sarcophagus, now in the museum at Volterrae. A figure on the left hand, possibly Circe, hands a cup to a man with a ram's head. Next, to the right, is an ox-headed man, who tears away at a tree in insensate fury; close by him, to the right again, is a seated male figure wrapped in a cloak; his head is in the original uncertain; to the extreme right another figure hastens away, bearing in her hand a small animal. The conception of the design is full of life, and also of humour, though probably unconscious. The magic cup has acted differently on each different nature; the sheep is evidently making the best of it—probably he had not far to fall; the ox has been of nobler make and fiercer passions; he wreaks his rage even on a senseless tree. The seated man-beast is very sad at heart; he wraps his mantle about him with pathetic dignity, and bears his sorrow silently. Critics differ about his head. If, as some say, it is that of a horse, his fall has been as light as may be, but, because he is still



a

b

Pl. 26.

noble, he feels it bitterly. Now, we might ask, Why is this curious scene—this presentation of men who enjoyed the pleasures of sin for a season—chosen for a sarcophagus relief, and most of all in grim Etruria? I think the answer is found in the preceding Plate. The story is taken as an allegory. Circe is conceived of as partly an evil enchantress, but partly also as a minister of the divine purpose, the instrument of purgatorial transmigration. These comrades of Odysseus are the types of men who, Nebuchadnezzar-like, are driven forth into the fields to eat grass for a season, who fall for a while that they may rise again the higher. The Semitic story in its poetic form makes its punishment more spiritual—a beast's heart as well as a beast's body; to the Greek bodily distortion was chastisement enough, even though his "mind was steadfast as before." The Greek in his theological system (though not in the fable of Circe) keeps this ungainly discipline for another world; the Semite does not shrink from the spectacle before his bodily eyes. When the spell of Circe becomes part of the mysteries of Hades, at once its fitness for sepulchral presentation appears; at once, also, there is a further fitness in the diversity of beast form; punishment is differentiated according to the crime to be cleansed.

Filling this gloomy function we must leave the bright yet awful daughter of Helios. Never does she in modern days regain her cheerful Homeric charm; she is beautiful once more in the hands of the poet of "Endymion," but with a fitful morbid beauty, very far removed, like the spirit of to-day, from the old heroic calm. It might be Queen Lab—it is not the Circe of Homer—whom Glaucus saw when he cried in misery and amaze—

"In thicket hid I cursed the haggard scene,
The banquet of my arms, my arbour queen
Seated upon an uptorn forest root,
And all around her shapes, wizard and brute,
Laughing and wailing, grovelling, serpentine.
Fierce, wan,
And tyrannising was the lady's look
As over them a gnarled staff she shook."

Mighty she is still, but no longer strong to comfort or even to cleanse. Gladly we turn our eyes away from this "sight too fearful for the feel of fear," and, looking back at the old-world picture, quiet our vision by its restful outline.

IV

THE MYTH OF THE DESCENT INTO HADES

We have seen how strangely, in the Homeric conception of Circe, good and evil are intermingled; how at one time she seems a power of the baser sort, the lower world—a sinister demon luring body and soul to destruction by the bait of sense temptation; at another moment she is in very truth the daughter of Helios, the sun god, a goddess of light and strength, of comfort and new life. Towards the end of the story the shadows clear wholly away, and about the lady Circe is shed a radiancy of awful brightness—fitting portent of the dread experience to come. One seems to feel that, after the interlude of soft delight and feasting, needful for a while to repair the wasting of soul and body, there comes with fresh fitness a girding-up of spirit for new perils of yet more fearful import. The strain to come justifies beforehand a timely slacking of the tension. It was fitting that "for the full circle of a year" the battered mariners should "sit day by day feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine." It was no less fitting that as "the seasons returned and the months wore away" their spirit should be "eager to be gone." The goddess never seems stronger and fairer than when to the entreaty of the hero she makes answer—

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, tarry ye now no longer in my house against your will; but first must ye perform another journey, and reach the dwelling of Hades and of dread Persephone, to seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias, the blind soothsayer, whose wits abide steadfast. To him Persephone hath given judgment, even in death, that he alone should have understanding; but the other souls sweep shadow-like around."[1]

How much of help and strength from the goddess the human, childlike hero needed, we feel when he tells us—

"Thus spake she; but as for me, my heart was broken, and I wept as I sat upon the bed, and my soul had no more care to live and to see the sunlight. But when I had my fill of weeping and grovelling, then at the last I answered and spake unto her, saying, And who, Circe, will guide us on this way? for no man ever yet sailed to hell in a black ship."

The goddess may have smiled to herself at this feeble subterfuge, but her answering words are full of gracious comfort. "Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, nay, trouble not thyself for want of a guide, by thy ship abiding; but set up the mast and spread abroad the white sails, and sit thee down, and the breeze of the north wind will bear thy vessel on her way." More than once we notice that when any great issue is to be accomplished, Odysseus, the crafty schemer, the man of "many a shift," is for a while helpless in the hands of the gods. Perhaps the most pathetic passage in the whole poem tells us how, fast asleep, he was borne by the Phæacians at last to his desired haven. "Soon as they

[1] *Od.* x. 486, etc.

bent backwards and tossed the sea water with the oar-blade, a deep sleep fell upon his eyelids—a sound sleep, very sweet, and next akin to death." Thus did the black ship bear to his home "a man whose counsel was as the counsel of the gods, one that erewhile had suffered much sorrow of heart in passing through the wars of men, and the grievous waves; *but for that time he slept in peace,* forgetful of all that he had suffered."[1] So now, when he is bidden to fare to Hades, it is the goddess who sends in the wake of the ship a "welcome breeze;" the hero's strength is to sit still.

Circe tells him beforehand to what manner of land he will come, and we must follow closely her description, for nearly every detail we shall recognise again in some artistic portrayal of the under world.

"But when thou hast now sailed in thy ship across the stream Oceanus, where is a waste shore and the groves of Persephone, even tall poplar trees and willows that shed their fruit before the season, there beach thy ship by deep eddying Oceanus, but go thyself to the dark house of Hades. Thereby into Acheron flows Pyriphlegethon, and likewise Cocytus, a branch of the water of the Styx, and there is a rock, and a meeting of the two roaring waters." Precisely this picture we shall see figured on a Greek wall-painting, but before we turn to it we must hear to the end the monition of Circe.

[1] "καὶ τῷ νήδυμος ὕπνος ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἔπιπτεν,
νήγρετος, ἥδιστος, θανάτῳ ἄγχιστα ἐοικώς.
. . . . . .
ἄνδρα φέρουσα θεοῖς ἐναλίγκια μήδε' ἔχοντα,
ὃς πρὶν μὲν μάλα πολλὰ πάθ' ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
ἀνδρῶν τε πτολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων
δὴ τότε γ' ατρέμας εὗδε, λελασμένος ὅσσ' ἐπεπόνθειν."

Od. xiii. 79-92.

"So, hero, draw nigh thereto, as I command thee, and dig a trench as it were a cubit in length and breadth, and about it pour a drink-offering to all the dead, first with mead, and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the third time with water, and sprinkle white meal thereon, and entreat with many prayers the strengthless heads of the dead, and promise that on thy return to Ithaca thou wilt offer in thy halls a barren heifer, the best thou hast, and wilt fill the pyre with treasure, and wilt sacrifice apart to Teiresias alone a black ram without spot, the fairest of your flock. But when thou hast with prayers made supplication to the lordly races of the dead, then offer up a ram and a black ewe, bending their heads towards Erebus, and thyself turn thy back, with thy face set for the shore of the river; then will many spirits come to thee of the dead that be departed. Thereafter thou shalt call to thy company and command them to flay the sheep which even now lie slain by the pitiless sword, and to consume them with fire; and to make prayer to the gods, to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone. And thyself draw the sharp sword from thy thigh and sit there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood, ere thou hast word of Teiresias. Then the seer will come to thee quickly, leader of the people; he will surely declare to thee the way and the measure of thy path, and as touching thy returning how thou mayest go over the teeming deep."

As the lady Circe ceased to speak the morning dawned, and she clad her hero in a mantle and doublet meet for the journey; and herself she arrayed in "a great shining robe, light of woof and gracious, and about her waist she cast a fair golden girdle, and put a veil upon her head."

Not in vain had been his sojourn in the magic halls, for straightway, from the transfigured presence of his divine mistress Odysseus passed out, and uproused his men, saying, "Sleep ye now no more, nor breathe sweet slumber; but let us go on our way, for the lady Circe hath verily shown me all."

We know what is to befall Odysseus; the time has come when he, like the hero of many another mythology, must descend into Hades. This is the uttermost trial by which the steadfast soul must be put to the proof. Only the great-hearted, even among the Greeks, might endure to the end: Dionysos to redeem his mother Semele; Herakles at the bidding of Eurystheus; Orpheus for his great love to Eurydike. It may be that these stories took their rise in some nature-myth; men saw the sun-god descend that he might ascend; but surely from very early days, about this simple notion there must have been woven a complex web of keen sorrow and vague aspiration—a longing, swiftly changed to a conviction, that somewhere, by some desolate lake or darkly yawning cavern, a way led to the world below, by which the living might pass to revisit the dead, the dead the living. How else should the Greeks have their Cimmerian land for Odysseus; the Romans their Avernus for Æneas; the Teutons their swamps of Drömling, whither departed souls have access; the Kelts their island on Lough Derg, sacred still as St. Patrick's Purgatory; the Aztecs their subterranean temple Michtan, door to the lower world; South African savages their cavern Marimatle, whence ghosts creep out, and whereby dead men's souls go down; Egyptians their sacred lake, across which the dead are rowed to their last home; Fijians their "calm and solemn

place of cliff and forest, where the souls of the dead embark for the judgment-seat of Udengei, and whither the living come in pilgrimage, thinking to see ghosts and gods ?"[1]

Not all nations, perhaps, are quick to fashion beautiful nature-myths; but all can feel the pang of separation from their dead, the desire for reunion. Among most there is also the feeling that to the dead, with their added experience, comes increase of wisdom,—wisdom to which, under specified conditions, they are willing to give oracular utterance, sometimes with beneficent, sometimes with malignant intent. Hence, beginning for the Greeks with the Theban Teiresias, we have the long line of traditions respecting magical rites and oracular utterances from the dead (*νέκυια* or *νεκυομαντεῖα*),—traditions dating from the dim distance of the Egyptian and Chaldæan past, through the classical period of Greece and Rome, through the legends of mediæval tribes, down in unbroken line to the latest manifestation of so-called spiritualistic phenomena,—a tradition sometimes degraded into a superstitious belief in possession by demons, sometimes sublimated into faith in the ministry of angels. In one and every modification we find this common formative element,—regret for the past shaping itself into comfort for the present, hope for the future.

It is happily not our duty to investigate these manifold *νεκυομαντεῖα*, to follow the clue of this golden thread of Truth, this faith in things invisible, through the maze of jugglery and deceit in which time has tangled it. For us there is a lighter and pleasanter task, though withal a solemn one,—to fare down into Hades with Odysseus, and reverently face the shade of the Theban Teiresias.

[1] Tylor, *Hist. of Primitive Cults.*

VI.

"Now when we had gone down to the ship and to the sea, first of all we drew the ship unto the fair salt water, and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and took those sheep and put them therein; and ourselves too climbed on board, sorrowing, and shedding big tears. And in the wake of our darked-prowed ship she sent a favouring wind that filled the sails—a kindly escort—even Circe of the braided tresses, a dread goddess of human speech. And we set in order all the gear throughout the ship, and sat us down; and the wind and the helmsman guided our bark. And all day long her sails were stretched in her seafaring, and the sun sank, and all the ways were darkened.

"She came to the limits of the world, to the deep-flowing Oceanus. There is the land and the city of the Cimmerians, shrouded in mist and cloud, and never does the shining sun look down on them with his rays, neither when he climbs up the starry heavens, nor when again he turns earthward from the firmament, but deadly night is outspread over miserable mortals. Thither we came and ran the ship ashore, and took out the sheep; but for our part we held on our way along the stream of Oceanus till we came to the place which Circe had declared to us."[1] Such a place is before us in Autotype VI. (the sixth in our series of Odyssey landscapes). There is nothing very distinctively Greek about the scene; we might be looking at the Fijian "calm and solemn peace of cliff and forest;" we might be about to land on the sacred island in Lough Derg; we might be in Finland, the "home of the dreamy imagination, with its deep bays and inlets, its granite mountains," waiting for the hero Wainamoinen to descend into the

[1] *Od.* xi. 1, etc.

Finnish Hades. A consecrated calm rests upon the Homeric Hades both in the poet's words and in the painter's picture. In striking contrast is the description by Apollonius Rhodius[1] of the approach to Acheron; in the Hades he tells us the peaceful cliffs are sharp precipices, the quiet waters rage and swell, the wicked are like a troubled sea that cannot rest.

The Esquiline landscape is purely ideal—no sketch from the coastland by Cumæ. It is, however, strictly Homeric, the entrance to the under world such as Circe foretold.[2] To the left, on deep eddying Oceanus, still in full sail, is the ship of Odysseus (all the rest were destroyed by the Læstrygonians). It has not yet been drawn in to shore, probably the hero is still supposed to be on board. He is coming, indeed, to a "waste shore," a land "shrouded in mist and darkness." Very skilfully, and with a surprising mastery of chiaroscuro, the painter has thrown the whole of the right half into deep shadow, illumined only by light which streams in from the outer world through the rocky doorway. In the front are the steel-blue waters of Acheron, and watching beside these waters and those of the mighty Cocytus we are no longer surprised to see

[1] "ἦ μέν τε κρημνοῖσιν ἀνίσχεται ἠλιβάτοισιν
εἰς ἅλα δερκομένη Βιθυνίδα· τῇ δ' ὑπὸ πέτραι
λισσάδες ἐρρίζωνται ἀλίβροχοι· ἀμφὶ δὲ τῇσιν
κῦμα κυλινδόμενον μεγάλα βρέμει."

APOLL. RHOD. ii. 731-734.

[2] "ἀλλ' ὁπότ' ἂν δὴ νηὶ δι' Ὠκεανοῖο περήσῃς,
ἔνθ' ἀκτή τε λάχεια καὶ ἄλσεα Περσεφονείης
μακραί τ' αἴγειροι καὶ ἰτέαι ὠλεσίκαρποι
. . . . . .
ἔνθα μὲν εἰς Ἀχέροντα Πυριφλεγέθων τε ῥέουσι
Κώκυτός θ' ὃς δὴ Στυγὸς ὕδατός ἐστιν ἀποῤῥώξ,
πέτρη τε ξύνεσίς τε δύω ποταμῶν ἐριδούπων."—*Od.* x. 508-515.

the personified rivers themselves. The whole scene is thickly overgrown with rushes; these are the sole representatives of the "tall poplar trees and willows that shed their fruit before the season," and they well serve to indicate the "waste," squalid shore. We shall see hereafter that these rushes may have been suggested by an older picture of greater fame. The main action of the scene takes place among the figures grouped to the right; but before we consider them we have other art monuments to review which deal with intermediate scenes, and we must advance a step further with the story.

"There Perimedes and Eurylochus held the victims; but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and dug a pit, as it were a cubit in length and breadth, and about it poured a drink offering to all the dead, first with mead and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the third time with water. . . . But when I had besought the tribes of the dead with vows and prayers, I took the sheep and cut their throats over a trench, and the dark blood flowed forth; and lo, the spirits of the dead that be departed gathered them from out of Erebus. Brides and youths unwed, and old men of many and evil days, and tender maidens with grief yet fresh at heart . . . and these many ghosts flocked together from every side about the trench with a wondrous cry, and pale fear got hold on me. . . . And myself I drew the sharp sword from my thigh, and sat there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood ere I had word of Teiresias." [1]

This piteous throng of waiting, eager ghosts we see pictured to the right of the scene in Autotype VI. Only

[1] *Od.* xi. 23, etc.

one will Odysseus allow to approach "ere" he has "word of Teiresias,"—his lost comrade Elpenor, who, though he has left the land of the living, still, because he lacks burial, has no lot as yet in the habitation of the dead. We see him seated high up on a rock (in Autotype VI.), away from the thronging ghosts; for though he has had speech with Odysseus, and due burial is promised, as yet his corpse lies still in the hall of Circe, dishonoured, unwept. His head is resting on his hand as if in sad meditation; above is the inscription Elpenor (ΕΛΠΗΝΩΡ); the E and the Ω are both defaced, the rest is clear; were there any doubt, the solitary position of the figure would suffice.

After Elpenor, had come up the soul of the mother of Odysseus; but even she is turned back to wait for the coming of the prophet. There is no figure in our picture inscribed Anticleia, but probably a woman standing to the front, behind Teiresias, is intended for her. "Anon came the soul of Theban Teiresias, with a golden sceptre in his hand, and he knew me and spake unto me: Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, what seekest thou *now*, wretched man, wherefore hast thou left the sunlight and come hither to behold the dead and a land desolate of joy? Nay, hold off from the ditch and draw back thy sharp sword, that I may drink of the blood and tell thee sooth.

"So spake he, and I put up my silver-studded sword into the sheath, and when he had drunk the dark blood, even then did the noble seer speak unto me." [1]

This is probably the precise moment seized by the painter. The shades have trooped up, but are refused

[1] *Od.* xi. 88.

Pl. 27

access; only Elpenor has had speech with Odysseus and returned to his rock. Teiresias approaches, a gray-bearded old man, clad in a long, priestly garment, a golden staff in his hand. Only one letter, the first of the inscribed name, is lost. Odysseus stands opposite in a curious attitude of eager expectancy; his inscription is quite clear (ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ). Behind him to the left is the scene of the sacrifice. The ram lies dead on his back; Perimedes and Eurylochus are busy about him. Perimedes is clearly the figure most to the left, for though his inscription is gone, that of the other, Eurylochus, is still plain. We shall have to return to our picture again when the souls of the dead fair women come forward; but for the present we must turn to other works of art which deal with the oracle scene.

In Plate 27 we have a design from a vase, executed, to judge from the style, some time during the period of the Diadochi. In the centre of the picture Odysseus is seated on a heap of stones, rudely piled together, and covered by a hanging drapery. A chlamys falls loosely behind him, and he wears richly decorated buskins. His sword, also richly ornamented, has been drawn from the scabbard; he points it downward, and sits in an attitude of expectation; he wears neither helmet nor pilos. To the right stands a young man in similar dress; his right arm is cast over his head in a somewhat sensational attitude. To the left a second youth, wearing chlamys and pilos, leans in an easy attitude on his lance. The two side figures are presumably Eurylochus and Perimedes. At the feet of Odysseus we see the heads of the "ram and black ewe," the gift of Circe, newly slaughtered, and uprising from the trench is the ghost-like head of the seer Teiresias. The portrayal is very

faithful to Homer; we have the pit, "as it were a cubit in length and breadth," the prescribed sacrifice, the seated hero, the drawn sword, the attendant comrades.[1] The design is executed in a large bold way, showing great mastery of outline, but already we miss something of the severity and simplicity of the old style. The attitudes and faces of all three figures are a little too elaborately expressive, the drapery too complex and sinuous, and the ornamentation on the buskins and weapons contrasts too emphatically with the simple naked forms. It is the design of an artist who worked under the influence rather of the traditions of painting than sculpture.

It is noticeable that nowhere does Homer specify the manner of the coming of Teiresias, so that the artist is left fancy-free in his depiction of the ghost's advent. His choice in this particular design is certainly curious. It is but fair to add that, mainly owing to the strange ghost head, grave doubt has been thrown on the whole portrayal. It has been maintained,[2] though I think without sufficient reason, that the head of Teiresias is interpolated, and that the scene depicted is not the descent into Hades at all. Take away this head, and we do not need to be told what would then be the natural interpretation: the mighty, seated hero and the slaughtered sheep would be enough. The doubt, though I believe it to be needless, is worth noting, because it reminds us of the extreme caution neces-

[1] "ἔνθ' ἱερήια μὲν Περιμήδης Εὐρύλοχός τε
ἔσχον· . . . .
βόθρον ὄρυξ' ὅσσον τε πυγούσιον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα . . . .
αὐτὸς δὲ ξίφος ὀξὺ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ
ἥμην."—*Od.* xi. 22 *seq.*

[2] On this question see Welcker, *Alte Denkmäler erklärt*, Part III.

Pl. 28.

sary in the interpretation of vases, and the ease with which a preconception may mislead. If we conceive the hero to be Odysseus, we interpret his attitude to be one of eager expectation; if Aias, of deep dejection. The moralist may note with satisfaction that nowhere more swiftly than in the study of archæology does the retribution of a false deduction follow on the error of a rash hypothesis.

Turning to Plate 28 we see a much more commonplace presentation of Teiresias. There is very little of the ghost about the old man leaning, half-seated, upon the rock, and conversing in serious ease with the hero opposite him. His character of seer is, however, indicated by the long garment, staff, and most of all by the veiled head. Odysseus stands opposite, his sword drawn; but his whole attitude, though perhaps not his face, is placid, almost careless; his foot is raised on a rock, and he rests his elbow on his knee; the descent into Hades is no doubt indicated by the rocky cleft which forms the background. The design is from a marble relief, now in the Louvre.

Of very curious and special interest is our next monument, relating to the Teiresias scene. We are not perhaps justified in calling it strictly Homeric, but it is certainly Odyssean. The design is from an Etruscan mirror (Plate 29); the execution is unusually careful and delicate. The seated figure is unmistakeably Odysseus. He is naked but for the drapery across his hip; he has drawn his sword, and points the blade upwards. The inscription is of course Etruscan, Uthuche, the frequent form for Odysseus. Equally unmistakeable is the standing figure; the winged petasos marks him at once as Hermes; his inscription would not help us much, Turms Aitas, — the letters read backwards. He

lifts his hand as if speaking to Odysseus, no doubt introducing his companion. This strange companion chains our attention from the first glance. Looking at the faint drooping figure, so tenderly supported by the spirit guide, one thinks instantly of the "lady mother" of Odysseus, sorrow-worn Anticleia, who died because of her "sore longing" for her son; and Hermes seems for a moment the old-world prototype of the Apostle John. But alas it is not so! We are bound to read the at best mysterious inscription above the head of the drooping ghost, "Phinthial Teiresias." What Phinthial may mean is known to the Etruscans, and probably to them only; but the "Teiresias" is enough to dispel our pleasant fancy. It is the aged seer again; his eyes are closed, for he is blind; leaning on his staff, for he is old; softly shod, for he has come in silence from the under world.[1] So womanly is the figure that some critics have thought an allusion was intended to the current legend of the alternate sex of the prophet.[2] This does not seem probable. It is well known that the Greeks, with characteristic daring, did venture on the pourtrayal of a double sex. Ill brooking the wise dualism of nature, they imperiously demanded of art that she should adventure a unity more complete. But here we have, I think, no Hermaphroditic conception. This dim, feeble figure is rather a most fit presentation of the haggard, nervous *medium*, whose "sinews," in Greek phraseology, "no more

[1] One is reminded of the "hellshoon" (helsko), which the Norseman bound on the feet of his dead in forethought for the toilsome, downward road. These low flat shoes, however, occur not infrequently in Etruscan designs, and with no special import.

[2] Ovid's unprofitable account of this matter may be read in *Metam.* iii. 320, *sqq.*

Pl. 29.

bind together the flesh and the bones." It is not the image of a prophet such as Circe must have pictured when she bade Odysseus "seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias, the blind soothsayer, *whose wits abide steadfast.*"[1]

We must return for a moment to the guide of Teiresias. In the Odyssey story no Hermes is present at this particular crisis of the descent into Hades. The ghosts come up unmarshalled. Hermes' psychopompos or psychagogos is not, however, wholly un-Homeric; we find him later ushering down into the lower world the souls of the slain suitors.[2] Certainly Teiresias in our mirror-design looks most unlikely to have come by himself. Probably the whole conception embodied in this particular picture is due to some Etruscan version of the myth, which may in its turn have been borrowed from the lost tragedy of Æschylus, the *Psychagogoi*, in which Hermes figured,[3] though exactly in what capacity we do not know, and in which Teiresias is summoned, and gives utterance to a strange prophecy, which we shall soon have to consider. We must leave this dreamy Etruscan ghost, and listen to the fateful words which fell from the lips of the Homeric Teiresias, the shade "whose wits abide steadfast."

"Thou art asking of thy sweet returning, great Odysseus, but that will the god make hard for thee; for methinks

[1] "ψυχῇ χρησομένους Θηβαίου Τειρεσίαο
μάντηος ἀλαοῦ, τοῦ τε φρένες ἔμπεδοί εἰσι.'—*Od.* x. 492-498.

[2] "'Ἑρμῆς δὲ ψυχὰς Κυλλήνιος ἐξεκαλεῖτο
ἀνδρῶν μνηστήρων· ἔχε δὲ ῥάβδον μετὰ χερσὶν
καλὴν χρυσείην, τῇ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει."—*Od.* xxiv. 1-3.
The passage is, however, a disputed one.

[3] In Aristophanes, Ranæ, 1267, we have the passage—
"'Ερμᾶν μὲν πρόγονον τίομεν γένος οἱ περὶ λίμναν,
which the Scholiast says is from the *Psychagogoi* of Æschylus.

thou shalt not pass unheeded by the Shaker of the Earth, who hath laid up wrath in his heart against thee, for rage at the blinding of his dear son. Yet even so, through many troubles, ye may come home, if thou wilt restrain thy spirit and the spirit of thy men so soon as thou shalt bring thy well-builded ship nigh to the isle Thrinacia, fleeing the sea of violet blue when ye find the herds of Helios grazing, and his brave flocks,—of Helios, who overseeth all, and overheareth all things. If thou doest these no hurt, being heedful of thy return, so may ye yet reach Ithaca, albeit in evil case. But if thou hurtest them I foreshow ruin for thy ship and for thy men; and even though thou shalt thyself escape, late shalt thou return in evil plight, with the loss of all thy company, on board the ship of strangers; and thou shalt find sorrows in thy house, even proud men that devour thy living, while they woo thy godlike wife and offer the gifts of wooing. Yet I tell thee on thy coming thou shalt avenge their violence." [1]

So far the prediction of Teiresias is verified by the issue which Homer himself narrates; the kine are stolen, the comrades of Odysseus perish to a man, the hero himself returns to his home on board the Phæakian ship; he finds in the "little isle" confusion and violence; he executes vengeance,—but before the vision of Teiresias a further future stretches of which in its accomplishment Homer says nothing.

[1] *Od.* xi. 100-116. Just such a prophecy is made to the Indian hero of the Red Swan. He too fares to the lower world, and, while he is wondering at the strange regions of light and darkness, a buffalo spirit asks him (as Anticleia asks Odysseus) how he, a living man, has dared to face the dead. The spirit further warns him that his wife is beset by evil wooers, and bids him go to her rescue. He returns to the upper world, sets his magic arrows to his bow, and lays the evil wooers at the feet of this faithful Penelope.—See H. R. Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, ii. 33.

"But when thou hast slain the wooers in thy halls, whether by guile, or openly with the edge of the sword, thereafter go thy way, taking with thee a shapen oar, till thou shalt come to such men as know not the sea, neither eat meat savoured with salt; yea, nor have they knowledge of ships, of vermilion cheek, nor shapen oars which serve for wings to ships."

This motive, Odysseus bearing on his shoulder the "shapen oar," we find engraven on a gem figured in Plate 30*a*. The hero wears his pilos; on the left shoulder he rests the oar, in the right hand he holds a torch; he seems to be stepping out cautiously into the darkness. The exact significance of the double attributes it is hard to determine. There may be some confusion between Odysseus descending into the darkness of the lower world and Odysseus starting on the predicted journey; or the torch may have some connection with the mysteries into which it was supposed Odysseus was initiated at Samothrace. The motive of the shapen oar is clear enough. The execution of the engraving is unusually fine.

A second gem leads us a step further in the prophecy. "And I will give thee," Teiresias continues, "a most manifest token, which cannot escape thee. In the day when another wayfarer shall meet thee and say that thou hast a winnowing-fan on thy stout shoulder, even then make fast thy shapen oar in the earth, and do goodly sacrifice to the Lord Poseidon, even with a ram and a bull and a boar, the mate of swine; and depart for home and offer holy hecatombs to the deathless gods that keep the wide heaven, to each in order due."

The witless wayfarer who "knew not of the sea" must

indeed some time have met Odysseus, for, in the design on an onyx figured in Plate 30*b*, the oar has been planted, and Odysseus stands firmly beside it. The incident seems a slight one, but this planting of the oar is the goal of the hero's long-protracted toil; and the "shapen oar" might well become the recognised symbol of endurance to the end, and as such very meet to be graven on the signet-ring worn by a faithful hand.

The genuineness of this later portion of the prophecy of Teiresias is well known to be open to doubt. It may have been interpolated to suit certain sequels to the Odyssey story composed by later poets.[1] Our gems offer no solution of the question. We have seen frequently that art borrowed its inspiration from sources other than the Homeric poem; and designs of the Græco-Roman period, such as those before us, might be derived from literature even later than the *Telegonia*. (Together with these two gems, though the moments they depict come earlier in the story, we group two other very fine gems of similar style,—Odysseus with the black ram, Plate 30*d*, and Odysseus with his foot on the slain sheep's head, Plate 30*c*.) But the seer has words of yet more mysterious and fateful import still unspoken: let us hear him to the end.

"And from the sea shall thine own death come,—the gentlest death that may be, which shall end thee foredone with smooth old age, and the folk shall dwell happily

[1] A grammarian says of the passage, "Nonnisi ea potuerit ætate exoriri qua cum fabula illa de Telegono conformata esset hanc rhapsodia studerent cum illa de Ulixes erroribus conjungere."

The *Telegonia* probably dates about B.C. 560; but possibly its author pirated from an earlier poem, the *Thesprotis*, composed centuries before by the mythic Musæus.

a

b

c

d

around thee. This that I say is sooth." Homer, at the close of his poem, leaves his hero resting at peace, content at last within his "little isle;" but poets of later days, brooding perhaps on these very words, "from the sea (ἐξ ἁλὸς) shall thine own death come," have fashioned for the great-hearted hero new perils and fresh voyaging through unknown seas. They fancied that the "man of many shifts" must weary of the simple, tranquil home-life by the "still hearth" among the "barren crags," and know

> "How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
> To rust unburnished, not to shine in use;"

till his longing grew to purpose, and within him and about him he felt the stirring of the sea, and he cried at last—

> "Come, my friends,
> 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
> Push off, and, sitting well in order, smite
> The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
> To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
> Of all the western stars, until I die."

Of such a second voyage and its dread end, Odysseus told to Dante, from his place of burning torment,—how he and his "small company" fared by the Pillars of Hercules, and saw ahead a vision of a mighty mountain, and their joy was turned to weeping;

> "For out of the new land a whirlwind rose,
> And smote upon the forepart of the ship;"

and so they perished by a fell sea doom.

We may well suppose that about this mysterious death of Odysseus, the ancients, as well as the moderns, wove their traditions. The Cyclic poets rumour that he perished by the spear of Telegonus, son of Circe. This spear was tipped

by the poison of a fish, and so the hero's death came to him *from the sea.* If we turn to Plate 31, we shall see a quaint variation of this tradition.[1]

A boat is nearing the shore; in it are two sailors; the foremost one is fixing his anchor—the goal of the voyage is evidently reached; the second sailor still works his oar. Above his head flies a sort of heron holding in his mouth a ray-fish, the poisonous trygon (*τρύγων*), which still endangers the Mediterranean waters. The heron is about to let fall his prey; its long stinging tail hangs directly over the rower's head. This rower is presumably Odysseus. The beautiful lady seated on the shore may be the patient Penelope, or she may be merely a coast nymph. All three figures are very youthful—too youthful to accord well with the explanation. We might be in doubt as to the situation intended, but the sceptic Sextus Empiricus (not usually a writer fruitful in suggestion) comes to our aid. He says, in his grumbling way, how can he attach importance to historical tradition when "one man says, for example, that Odysseus died by the hand of his son Telegonos, another that he breathed his last owing to a sea-gull which let fall on his head the sting of a ray-fish."[2] Such a death assuredly is about to befall the rower in our vase-

[1] The design in Plate 31 is taken from the Vasi Fittili of Inghirami. Since it was drawn it was long supposed that the original vase had perished, but it has been rediscovered at the Porcinari House, Naples. The following inscriptions have been made out:—Above the woman's head ΠΟΝΤΙΑ, which would accord with the supposition that she is a sea or coast nymph; above the head of the foremost sailor ΔΑΙΜΟΣ, meaning unknown; above the head of the rower ΚΑΜ-ΡΙΣ. Odysseus was, we know, called by his mother *κάμμορε φωτῶν*, and the two forms *may* have some connection.

[2] "*τινὸς μὲν λέγοντος ὅτι Ὀδυσσεὺς ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου παιδὸς κατὰ ἄγνοιαν ἀνήρηται τινὸς δὲ ὅτι λάρου κέντρον θαλασσίας τρυγόνος ἀφέντος αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ διεφώνησεν.*"—SEXT. EMPIR., *Adv. Gramm.*, 273.

14.31.

painting, whether he be Odysseus or not. A similar fate, though in less picturesque form, was, we know, prophesied for Odysseus by the seer Teiresias in the *Psychagogoi* of Æschylus.[1] It is thought that the issue *foretold* in the *Psychagogoi* may have been *accomplished* in a second or third drama of the same trilogy, bearing possibly the title of Odysseus the Sting-Pierced (*ἀκανθοπλὴξ*). Such a drama we know to have been written by Sophokles, but no notice of its contents has been preserved us.

These literary memorials of a later tradition are too curious, and our vase-painting too beautiful, to have been passed over in silence; but already the oracles of the "prince Teiresias" have detained us too long, and we must suffer the spirit of the seer to go back within the house of Hades, for a mighty throng presses behind him.

Next in order draws near the shade of Anticleia, the daughter of Autolycus the great-hearted. Of this pathetic meeting between Odysseus and the soul of his mother, art has left us no certain monument. It was the subject of a noted decorative design in the temple of Apollo at Cyzicus, but the only record left us of it is an epigram in the Anthology.[2]

[1] Scholiast on Odyss. xi. 134, says that Æschylus in his *Psychagogoi* describes how the heron (Ἐρωδιός) swallowed the poisonous fish itself, and hence—

"ἐκ τοῦδ' ἄκανθα ποντίου βοσκήματος
σήψει παλαιὸν δέρμα καὶ τριχορροές,"

the bird is described just as it appears in our vase-painting, *i.e.*, "ὑψόθι ποτώμενος."

[2] "Μᾶτερ Ὀδυσσῆος πινυτόφρονος Ἀντίκλεια
ζῶσα μὲν εἰς Ἰθάκην οὐκ ὑπέδεξο πάϊν
ἀλλὰ σε νῦν Ἀχέροντος ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖσι γεγῶσαν
θαμβεῖ ἀνὰ γλυκερὰν ματέρα δερκόμενος."

Anth. Palat. iii. 8.

In our first picture (the wall-painting in Autotype VI.) we left the shades of the mighty women of the past thronging the reedy background. To them we must return, for while Anticleia has told her sad story, they wait to have speech of Odysseus.

"And lo, the women came up; for the high goddess Persephone sent them forth, all they that had been the wives and daughters of mighty men. And they gathered and pressed about the black blood, and I took counsel how I might question them each one. And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. I drew my long hanger from my stalwart thigh, and suffered them not all at one time to drink of the dark blood." [1]

We note, almost with regret, how, again and again, this ritual point, the drinking of the dark blood, is emphasised. This Nekyia, this "Book of the Dead," is, we are obliged to own, if not "steeped" yet at least tinged "with the Animism of barbarous peoples." [2] In the mythologies, alike of nations the most barbarous as well as the most cultured, the soul is conceived of as a sort of shadowy material shape, to be revivified by the same material essence as the body itself, by that blood which is the life. For this warm draught of life the ghosts are greedy.

Only three of the fourteen famous women who declared to Odysseus their lineage can be identified in our landscape. Phædra (ΦΑΙΔΡΑ) is clearly inscribed; Homer only mentions her in passing:[3] "and I saw Phædra." Later we shall meet her again on the walls of the Lesche at Delphi, with the symbol of her destruction in her hands. Ariadne (ΑΡΙΑΔΝΕ) is also plainly inscribed, and Homer tells her

[1] *Od.* xi. [2] See *Hellenica*, page 437. [3] *Od.* xi. 321.

tale—"fair Ariadne, the daughter of wizard Minos, whom Theseus on a time was bearing from Crete to the slope of sacred Athens. Yet had he no joy of her; for Artemis slew her ere that, in sea-girt Dia, by reason of the witness of Dionysos." [1] Ariadne, too, will meet us in the Lesche with her sister, sadder even than herself.

Our third inscribed fair woman is Leda (ΕΔΑ). The L of the inscription is lost; the remaining letters are clear. She, Homer tells us,[2] was "the famous bedfellow of Tyndareus, who bare to Tyndareus two sons hardy of heart,—Castor, tamer of steeds, and Polydeuces the boxer."

In the reedy background we have to fancy the ghosts of a throng of other women, "wives and daughters of heroes," Tyro, Antiope, Alcmene, Epicaste, Chloris, Iphimedeia, Prokris, Mæra, Clymene, Eriphyle. Of these we shall meet again all but Tyro, Alcmene, and Epicaste, when we come to consider the great picture of Polygnotus.

After "holy Persephone had scattered this way and that the spirits of the women folk," [3] the heroes came up to have speech. Agamemnon and Achilles, and Patroclus and Archilochus; only the soul of Aias stood apart, sullen and vengeful.[4] These heroes, too, we shall later behold in the Delphian Lesche; for the present we must turn to our second Hades landscape from the Esquiline series, and note the scenes that are there depicted. The ghosts now in view, we observe, no longer throng to approach Odysseus; he seems to have sight into the innermost depths of hell.[5]

[1] *Od.* xi. 321. [2] *Od.* xi. 298. [3] *Od.* xi. 385, 386. [4] *Od.* xi. 544.

[5] This incongruity has led to the supposition that the whole passage is interpolated to suit later conventional representations of Hades. Lauer, arguing from the Theban origin of Teiresias and many of the heroines, supposes that the whole νεκυία is of Bœotian authorship. See Lauer, *Literarischer Nachlass.*

The landscape figured in Autotype VII. is unhappily much mutilated. The design seems to have been rudely interrupted. Possibly some barbarian hand may have broken through the picture to make a door or window. It was clearly not intended for a half picture. To the left we see a large overhanging rock; beneath it a narrow stream, on the opposite side of which rises hilly ground. Here lies full length an outstretched figure—we do not need the inscription (TITTOΣ) to tell us his name. His enormous size is somewhat diminished for artistic purposes by the foreshortening his position necessitates. Two vultures, one of which is very indistinct, tear at his liver; with his left hand he seems to try without success to keep them at bay. The Homeric description has been closely followed. "And I saw Tityos, son of renowned Earth, lying on a levelled ground, and he covered nine roods as he lay; and vultures twain beset him, one on either side, and gnawed at his liver, piercing even to the caul; but he drove them not away with his hands. For he had dealt violently with Leto, the famous bedfellow of Zeus, as she went up to Pytho through the fair lawns of Panopeus." [1] Worn out at last with punishment for this awful sacrilege, we shall see him in the Lesche of that very shrine of Pytho, to which Leto was going.

Equally clear is the inscription and the attitude of Sisyphus (ΣIΣΥΦOΣ), whom Odysseus saw, "in strong torment, grasping a monstrous stone with both his hands. He was pressing thereat with hands and feet, and trying to roll the stone towards the brow of the hill. But oft as he was about to hurl it over the top the weight would

[1] *Od.* xi. 576.

VII

drive him back, so once again to the plain rolled the stone—the pitiless thing. And he once more kept heaving and straining, and the sweat the while was pouring down his limbs, and the dust rose upwards from his head."[1] Sisyphus, too, is numbered, as we shall see, among the fruitless labourers in the hall at Delphi, whose hell is their bootless toil.

So far all is clear, but above Sisyphus there stands in our picture a naked youth of threatening aspect. No inscription helps us. In connection with Sisyphus and Tityos Homer mentions only Tantalus, Herakles, Minos, Orion. Tantalus is impossible; probably he occupied in part the lost right-hand part of the picture. Herakles would naturally have held the three-headed Cerberus; Minos would have been seated on his throne. Only Orion is left; and on the whole our figure tallies with Homer's description: "I marked the mighty Orion driving the wild beasts together over the mead of asphodel, the very beasts that himself had slain on the lonely hills, with a strong mace all of bronze in his hands, that is ever unbroken."[2] The gesture of the figure is certainly that of a man driving on something ahead of him. The giant stature is seen by the fact that his size is the same as that of the women in the foreground, though some allowance must be made for inadequate knowledge of perspective. The object he holds in his hand is indistinct, but it might be intended for the "strong mace, all of bronze."

Of the scene presented in the foreground Homer tells us nothing; but the intent is obvious. Round a huge vessel, half buried in the ground, are grouped four female

[1] *Od.* xi. 593. [2] *Od.* xi. 572.

figures. Their arms are bare; they wear head-dresses; the centre figure has emptied her jug; two others are in the act of pouring out their water; the fourth seems to turn away to refill her vessel; a fifth has gone to the river to replenish her jar, and sits down a while, sorrowful and exhausted. The inscription is effaced but for three letters, AIΔ; the remainder are obviously thus supplied:— ΔΑΝ]ΑΙΔ[ΕΣ (Danaides). We shall see in the picture of Polygnotus, not indeed these actual Danaides, but a group analogous to them,—a family of the Uninitiated, who for ever carry water in vain in leaking jars. I believe that our landscape-painter had come to regard some such figures as these as a sort of necessary conventional symbol of Hades; but, desirous of making his presentation Epic rather than Orphic, he gave to his fruitless toilers the title of Danaides.

We have learnt to know how the Hades of Homer appeared to the fancy of the Augustan wall-painter. Though his work is somewhat marred by time, enough remains to allow of a clear and vivid conception. The painter's name is lost, but his pictures remain,—a lasting treasure. Another artist[1] had already depicted on walls of world-wide fame this Hades scene. The name of Polygnotus is still honoured among men; but no fragment of this, his greatest work, has survived the wreck of time. Some four hundred years before the Greek painter began to decorate

[1] A famous Νεκυία was also painted by a *third* artist, the celebrated Nikias, more than a century later than Polygnotus, but no description remains of it; we only know that he refused to sell it to Attalus for sixty talents, and presented it to his native city of Athens. See Plut. xi. 2; Pliny, *N.H.* xxxv. 132; and *Anthol.* ix. 792.

for a wealthy Roman his house on the Esquiline Hill, Polygnotus, by command of the Cnidians, adorned the walls of their Lesche at Delphi with a design, depicting on the right hand the taking of Troy, on the left the descent of Odysseus into Hades. Though his work has wholly perished, there remains for us a detailed description. Seven whole chapters are devoted by Pausanias to his account of the wall-paintings of the Lesche, and however uncritical, almost incoherent, we may consider his loose narrative, to it we must turn as our main source for information.

The task of reconstructing these Lesche pictures from the meagre material of these travellers' notes has fascinated archæologists from all times. The subject has a literature to itself,—a literature of absorbing interest, and sometimes amazing ingenuity. The problem to be solved is, briefly, What and in what manner did Polygnotus paint in the hall at Delphi? In what sequence were his subjects placed, and with what degree of artistic perfection did he render them? The materials for its solution are the narrative of Pausanias, the literary sources (whether written or verbally traditional) to which Polygnotus resorted for his mythology, our knowledge generally of his style, and the treatment of analogous subjects by other artists. Of these topics time and space alike forbid the exhaustive treatment. We must be content if, with Pausanias at hand, and the restoration of the modern artist before our eyes, we may stand in spirit for a while in the Delphian Lesche, and see clearly at least, if not completely, some shadow of the ghosts that throng the kingdoms of Persephone. Let us turn to Plate 32.

To the left of the picture is seen a river, which Pau-

sanias says is evidently Acheron.[1] In its ghastly waters dank reeds are growing, and shadowy fishes can be dimly seen. The foreground of our Esquiline landscape picture, we have seen, was thickly overgrown with rushes, no doubt suggested by the swamps of Avernus; this is perhaps the only point in which the two pictures clearly resemble each other. On the river is a boat, and a ferryman sitting to his oars, the ancient Charon. This Charon,[2] unknown to Homer, Pausanias thinks was borrowed by Polygnotus from the Minyas,[3] where the ferryman is introduced refusing to admit to his boat Theseus and Pirithoös. The shades whom Charon ferries across are too dim for their relationship[4] to be clearly made out; two only Pausanias recognises, the maiden Cleobeia and the youth Tellis. The maiden carries on her knee the sacred cista; she it was who first brought to her island home of Thasos (the painter's birthplace) the mysteries of Demeter. We shall never know what was the tale of love and sacrifice and early death which brought these two unwed to Charon's boat; but they cross together, and bear with them the symbol of sacred joy. Below, in contrast perhaps to this scene of holy bliss, we see an impious son strangled in Hades by an avenging father, and a

[1] "ὕδωρ εἶναι ποταμὸς ἔοικε, δῆλα ὡς ὁ Ἀχέρων, καὶ κάλαμοί τε ἐν αὐτῷ πεφυκότες, καὶ ἀμυδρὰ οὕτω δή τι τὰ εἴδη τῶν ἰχθύων σκιὰς μᾶλλον ἢ ἰχθῦς εἰκάσεις· καὶ ναῦς ἐστιν ἐν τῷ ποταμῷ καὶ ὁ πορθμεὺς ἐπὶ ταῖς κώπαις."—PAUS. x. 28.

[2] Charon still lives on in modern Greece as Charos or Charontas. But he is now no longer a mere ferryman, rather he is a terrible impersonation of Hades itself. He rides a coal-black horse, his eyes gleam fire, and, Erlkönig fashion, he drags off children from their struggling parents.

[3] "ἐπηκολούθησε δὲ ὁ Πολύγνωτος ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν ποιήσει Μινυάδι."—PAUS. x. 28.

[4] "οἱ δὲ ἐπιβεβηκότες τῆς νεὼς οὐκ ἐπιφανεῖς εἰς ἅπαν εἰσὶν οἷς προσήκουσι." This vague sentence leaves quite undetermined the number of persons in the boat. Possibly there were only Tellis and Cleobeia.

man tortured for sacrilege. Above the criminals, and above the boat of Charon, watches a grim and terrible fiend, of whom no author known to Pausanias makes mention, a Delphic Hades-demon, Eurynomus,[1] of "blue-black colour, like flesh-eating flies." He lies upon a vulture's skin, and shows his savage teeth.

So far the figures presented by Polygnotus are foreign to the Odyssey story; but next to the fiend Eurynomus are standing two matrons, Auge, the goodliest of the wives of Herakles, and Iphimedeia, who told to Odysseus the story of her mighty sons, how they sought to "pile a pathway" to the skies, but the son of Leto slew them.[2] Above the matrons are two figures of special interest for us, Perimedes and Eurylochus. They are represented carrying the victims, black rams. Apparently they were separated from Odysseus by some considerable interval. After them is a man seated, inscribed Ocnus; his quaint companion relieves by a touch of humour the gloom of Hades. Ocnus[3] is twisting a rope; near him stands a she-ass, who eats the rope as fast as he twists. Ocnus it seems was in the upper

[1] Pausanias distinctly states that no such demon was described either in the Minyas or the Nostoi; and for the name and nature of Eurynomus he relies on the guides; probably the fiend embodied some local conception—

"δαίμονα εἶναι τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου φασὶν οἱ Δελφῶν ἐξηγηταὶ τὸν Εὐρύνομον, καὶ ὡς τὰς σάρκας περιεσθίει τῶν νεκρῶν, μόνα σφίσιν ἀπολείπων τὰ ὀστᾶ."—Paus. x. 28.

And again—

"ἡ δὲ Ὀμήρου ποίησις ἡ ἐς Ὀδυσσέα καὶ ἡ Μινυάς τε καλουμένη καὶ οἱ Νόστοι ἴσασιν οὐδένα Εὐρύνομον."—Paus. x. 28.

[2] *Od.* xi. 315-320 :—

"Ὅσσαν ἐπ' Ὀλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη."

[3] An Ocnus occurred in some play by Kratinus. See Meinecke, *Fr. Com.* ii. 203 :—

"Ἀρίσταρχος δὲ διὰ τὸ Κρατῖνον ὑπόθεσθαι ἐν Ἅιδου σχοινίον πλέκοντα, ὄνον δὲ τὸ πλεκομένον ἀπεσθίοντα."

world an industrious man, with an extravagant wife; perhaps he was a miser, else why in Hades is this conjugal discipline protracted? The feeling here is certainly rather Hesiodic than Homeric. Near to this humorous pair lies a shadowy shape, more terrible because so dim, Tityos, tortured no longer, but worn out through ceaseless punishment.[1] In our landscape-painting we have seen the vultures tear him; we feel how much grander is this conception of the exhausted ghost. Above this figure, close to the thrifty Ocnus and his mate, we meet another familiar pair. Ariadne sits upon a rock, and looks towards her sister Phædra. Phædra holds in both her hands a rope, and from it her body is suspended. The description of Pausanias is so vague, it is hard to say how the unhappy Phædra hung; the traveller only adds that, "though the attitude was pleasing and becoming, it indicated the manner of her death.[2]

Beneath these luckless sisters must have been depicted a charming group—somewhat analogous, perhaps, to the so-called Herse and Pandrosos of the Parthenon—lovely Chloris reclining against the knees of her dear friend Thyia, for

[1] "*γέγραπται δὲ καὶ Τιτυὸς οὐ κολαζόμενος ἔτι ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ συνεχοῦς τῆς τιμωρίας ἐς ἅπαν ἐξανηλωμένος ἀμυδρὸν καὶ οὐδὲ ὁλόκληρον εἴδωλον.*"—PAUS. X.

[2] "*Ἀριάδνη*) *κάθηται μὲν ἐπὶ πέτρας ὀρᾷ δὲ ἐς τὴν ἀδελφὴν Φαίδραν τό τε ἄλλο αἰωρουμένην σῶμα ἐν σειρᾷ καὶ ταῖς χερσὶν ἀμφοτέρωθεν τῆς σειρᾶς ἐχομένην. Παρεῖχε δὲ τὸ σχῆμα καίπερ ἐς τὸ εὐπρεπέστερον πεποιημένον συμβάλλεσθαι τὰ ἐς τῆς Φαίδρας τὴν τελευτήν.*"

The manner depicted by the modern artist is no fanciful conceit, but would be quite consonant with Greek tradition. It appears that at the festival of the Attic Aiora the women of Athens were wont to swing themselves, in memory of an Attic heroine, Erigone, who died the death of Phædra. They sang during this to us somewhat ghastly pastime a song by Theodorus of Colophon. Vase pictures with female figures swinging occur not unfrequently; they may have some reference to this ceremony.

between these two, the traveller tells us, great love subsisted. Of Chloris Homer sang that she was bride of Neleus and bare glorious children to her lord, among them "stately Pero, the wonder of all men."[1] Near to them, standing alone, is jealous Prokris, whom unwittingly her husband slew, and after her comes Clymene, also the bride of Kephalos. Not far away is Theban Megara seated sadly alone; her Herakles put away because her children perished by the hand of the gods. Above the heads of these women the daughter of Salmoneus is seated on a stone, and near her stands "hateful Eriphyle, who took fine gold for the price of her dear lord's life."[2] She feels with her finger tips for her neck through the folds of her garment; perchance the necklet still burns there. Still higher in the picture, and possibly in a central position, we see the group already so familiar. Odysseus crouches on his knees[3] and holds a sword over the ditch. The prophet Teiresias approaches, and after Teiresias is figured Anticleia seated, waiting, on a stone. Near to Odysseus is Elpenor, not, as we saw him in our landscape, holding aloof. The attitude of Odysseus (*ὀκλάζοντα ἐπὶ τοῖς ποσίν*) is markedly different from that we have seen in the vase-painting. Some analogy is observable between this description of Pausanias and the ungainly posture in the Esquiline wall-picture. Elpenor's dress is carefully noted; he wears a gar-

[1] "*τοῖσι δ' ἐπ' ἰφθίμην Πηρὼ τέκε θαῦμα βροτοῖσι.*"—*Od.* xi 287.

[2] "*στυγερήν τ' Ἐριφύλην*
ἣ χρυσὸν φίλου ἀνδρὸς ἐδέξατο τιμήεντα."—*Od.* xi. 326, 327.

[3] "*ὑπὲρ δὲ τὴν Ἐριφύλην ἔγραψεν Ἑλπήνορά τε καὶ Ὀδυσσέα ὀκλάζοντα ἐπὶ τοῖς ποσὶν ἔχοντα ὑπὲρ τοῦ βόθρου τὸ ξίφος, καὶ ὁ μάντις Τειρεσίας πρόεισιν ἐπὶ τὸν βόθρον· μετὰ δὲ τὸν Τειρεσίαν ἐπὶ πέτρας ἡ Ὀδυσσέως μήτηρ Ἀντίκλειά ἐστιν.*"—Paus. x. 28.

ment made of rushes after the manner of sailors.[1] Beneath Odysseus are seated the pair whom Homer tells us the hero was "fain to see, Theseus and Peirithoos, renowned children of the gods."[2] They are represented seated on a throne together—in their death they were not divided. Theseus holds in his hands both his own sword and that of Peirithoos. Pausanias fancies that Peirithoos looks at the swords with angry eyes, indignant that they may not serve him for bold deeds.

After this pair of friends come the two daughters of Pandareus. So goodly was their nurture we cannot forbear to tell of it as Penelope[3] told in her prayer to Artemis. "Their father and their mother the gods had slain, and the maidens were left orphans in the halls, and fair Aphrodite cherished them with curds and sweet honey and delicious wine. And Here gave them beauty and wisdom beyond the lot of women, and holy Artemis dowered them with stature, and Athene taught them skill in all famous handiwork." But alas! rude fate cut short this gentle tendance. "Now,

[1] "*ἀμπέχεται φορμὸν ἀντὶ ἐσθῆτος σύνηθες τοῖς ναύταις φόρημα*"—the wonted garment, too, of fishermen, according to Theokritus.—*Id.* xxi. 13.

[2] "*καὶ νύ κ' ἔτι προτέρους ἴδον ἀνέρας οὓς ἔθελόν περ·*
Θησέα Πειριθοόν τε, θεῶν ἐρικυδέα τέκνα."—*Od.* xi. 631.

[3] "*τῇσι τοκῆας μὲν φθῖσαν θεοί, αἱ δ' ἐλίποντο*
ὀρφαναὶ ἐν μεγάροισι κόμισσε δὲ δῖ' Ἀφροδίτη
τυρῷ καὶ μέλιτι γλυκερῷ καὶ ἠδέϊ οἴνῳ
Ἥρη δ' αὐτῇσιν περὶ πασέων δῶκε γυναικῶν
εἶδος καὶ πινυτὴν μῆκος δ' ἔπορ' Ἄρτεμις ἁγνὴ
ἔργα δ' Ἀθηναίη δέδαε κλυτὰ ἐργάζεσθαι.
Εὖτ' Ἀφροδίτη δῖα προσέστιχε μακρὸν Ὄλυμπον
κούρῃς αἰτήσουσα τέλος θαλεροῖο γάμοιο
ἐς Δία τερπικέραυνον. . . . .
τόφρα δὲ τὰς κούρας Ἅρπυιαι ἀνηρείψαντο
καὶ ῥ' ἔδοσαν στυγερῇσιν Ἐρινύσιν ἀμφιπολεύειν."
Od. xx. 67.

while fair Aphrodite was wending to high Olympus to pray that a glad marriage might be accomplished for the maidens, and to Zeus she went whose joy is in the thunder . . , in the meanwhile the spirits of the storm snatched away these maidens, and gave them to be handmaids to the hateful Erinnyes." In Hades they are crowned by Polygnotus with flowers, and, because unwed, play, girl fashion, with the astragaloi,[1] symbols perhaps of Fate.

After the two daughters of Pandareus comes a series of Trojan heroes. Antilochus, with one foot on a stone,—noble Antilochus, whom Odysseus spake with in Hades. After him the soul of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, still the king of men, for he leans with his left arm on a sceptre, and holds in both hands a wand. We know the sad tale he had to tell to Odysseus, and the embittered counsel that, all unneeded, he proffered. Three other mighty Trojan heroes are nigh at hand; Achilles and Protesilaus, seated, gaze at each other; near them stands Patroklus. Above, two friends, young Phocus and aged Iascus; from the finger of Phocus Iascus draws a ring—pledge of fidelity.

Above them, again, Mæra is seated alone on a stone; her too Odysseus saw. She was a heroine of the Nostoi, and died a virgin. After Mæra, Actæon the huntsman, with his mother; she holds a fawn in her hand; near them is a hound to show the manner of the youth's death.

Beneath these figures, in the lower part of the picture, is a group at which we well may gaze with earnest eyes. Upon a hillock, leaning against a sacred tree, is seated the

[1] Some echo, perhaps, of the motive of this lovely group we may have in the terracotta-maidens playing with astragaloi, now in the British Museum. Guide to 2d Vase Room, Part II., page 96.

minstrel Orpheus, clad in simple Greek dress. In his left hand he holds a lyre, and with his right he touches a willow branch.[1] Exactly what mystic significance Polygnotus attached to this Orpheus figure we shall probably never know; around his name has grown "a web of hopes and emotions which no hand can disentangle now."[2] Odysseus tells us nothing of the prophet bard; in his days mysticism had not cast over Hellas that cloud which, at the first softly transparent, was soon to deepen into darkness. This lute of Orpheus, sounding in Hades, rouses us to note how far, from key to key, the music of faith had wandered since Homer's simple song. Orpheus, in a later Hades picture, we shall meet again; at present beside him are listening Promedon, leaning also on the willow, Schedios, and hoary Pelias seated on a throne. Schedios is crowned with reeds and holds a dagger. Near to Pelias sits sightless Thamyris, his shattered lyre beside him; he himself, Pausanias notes, looks humbled and dejected. All these are shaded by the sacred grove of Persephone.[3] Above them is Marsyas sitting on the stone; he teaches to the boy Olympus his art of piping. Still further above come a group of Trojans, enemies of Odysseus, whom Polygnotus (Pausanias thinks) has purposely collected in one place. Palamedes and Thersites play with the dice which Palamedes[4] on earth invented. Between this group and

[1] "ἀποβλέψαντι δὲ αὖθις ἐς τὰ κάτω τῆς γραφῆς ἔστιν ἐφεξῆς μετὰ τὸν Πάτροκλον οἷα ἐπὶ λόφου τινὸς Ὀρφεὺς καθεζόμενος, ἐφάπτεται δὲ καὶ τῇ ἀριστερᾷ κιθάρας, τῇ δὲ ἑτέρᾳ χειρὶ ἰτέας κλῶνές εἰσιν ὧν ψαύει, προσανακέκλιται δὲ τῷ δένδρῳ."

[2] See Mr. F. W. H. Myers' Greek Oracles—*Hellenica*, p. 459.

[3] "ἔνθ' ἀκτή τε λάχεια καὶ ἄλσεα Περσεφονείης
μακραί τ' αἴγειροι καὶ ἰτέαι ὠλεσίκαρποι."—*Od.* x. 510, 511.

[4] Palamedes, unknown to Homer, a prominent hero in the Cyclic poems and a not infrequent figure in vase-paintings.

Actæon stands Salaminian Aias, the only shade (we remember) who remained sullenly apart,[1] and refused to have speech of Odysseus, even in Hades remembering his enmity. Watching the dice players stands the other Aias, the son of Oileus, whom Odysseus, for his daring to Cassandra, desired to stone to death. Above this Aias stands Meleager, of whom Homer[2] tells us that he died at the hand of the Erinnys through the curse of Althæa. In the lowest part of the picture sits Hector, his hands about his knee, in deep depression; next to him Memnon, with one hand on the shoulder of Sarpedon. Memnon wears a robe decorated with painted birds. Near Memnon is a naked Æthiopian boy. This beautiful hero we shall meet again depicted in the wall decoration of an Etruscan tomb. Above Memnon and Sarpedon is Paris, yet a beardless youth; he seems to clap his hands in token that he calls Penthesilea, but she turns away, scorning him. She is attired like a virgin huntress, with Scythian bow and leopard skin.

Above these two are the figures of two women, one young, one old They carry water in jars with holes. Instinctively we think of the Danaides, but Pausanias tells us that a common inscription denotes them as two of the uninitiated, and then our thoughts turn to Sokrates,[3] and we remember how a "certain ingenious man of Italy or

[1] "οἵη δ' Αἴαντος ψυχὴ Τελαμωνιάδαο
νόσφιν ἀφεστήκει, κεχολωμένη εἵνεκα νίκης."—*Od.* xi. 543, 544.

[2] See *Iliad.* ix. 571 :—
"κικλήσκουσ' Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν
πρόχνυ καθεζομένη, δεύοντο δὲ δάκρυσι κόλποι
παιδὶ δόμεν θάνατον· τῆς δ' ἠεροφοῖτις Ἐρινὺς
ἔκλυεν."

[3] "καὶ τοῦτ' ἄρα τις μυθολογῶν κομψὸς ἀνὴρ ἴσως Σικελός τις ἢ Ἰταλικὸς, παράγων τῷ ὀνόματι διὰ τὸ πιθανόν τε καὶ πιστικὸν ὠνόμασε πίθον, τοὺς δὲ

Sicily" told him a fable that the appetites of the uninitiate soul were as a leaky jar, figuring thereby its insatiate nature. Did this "ingenious man of Sicily," Empedokles perhaps, ever gaze on the picture of Polygnotus and see these women, these uninitiate souls, seek for ever in vain to draw water from the wells of salvation? If not Empedokles, at least Sokrates, the first of ethical philosophers, would surely sometime ponder this masterpiece of the greatest ethical painter.[1]

After these hapless, thirsty souls a group of three fair figures follows. Callisto, with the hide of a bear for the covering of her couch, her feet resting on the lap of the Arcadian nymph Nomia, and for the third "stately Pero," whose wooer must needs "drive off the kine" of Tyro that Iphikles held.[2]

After this group of goodly women there rises a precipice up which Sisyphus toils for ever to raise his mighty stone. Below him more water-carriers enduring fruitless labour with perforated jars; these again are the uninitiated—an old man, an old woman, a matron, and a boy, each sex and every age. Below again, and last of all, is Tantalus in torment, as

ἀνοήτους ἀμυήτους· τῶν δὲ ἀμυήτων τοῦτο τῆς ψυχῆς οὗ αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι εἰσί, τὸ ἀκόλαστον αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐ στεγανὸν, ὡς τετρημένος εἴη πίθος, διὰ τὴν ἀπληστίαν ἀπεικάσας. τοὐναντίον δὴ οὗτος σοί, ὦ Καλλίκλεις, ἐνδέικνυται ὡς τῶν ἐν "Αιδου—τὸ ἀειδὲς δὴ λέγων—οὗτοι ἀθλιώτατοι ἂν εἶεν οἱ ἀμύητοι καὶ φοροῖεν εἰς τὸν τετρημένον πίθον ὕδωρ ἐτέρῳ τοιούτῳ τετρημένῳ κοσκίνῳ."—Plat. Gorg. 493, A. B. See Paus. x. 31.

[1] "*οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' ὅσον διαφέρει καὶ περὶ τὴν τούτων θεωρίαν, δεῖ μὴ τὰ Παύσωνος θεωρεῖν τοὺς νέους, ἀλλὰ τὰ Πολυγνώτου κἂν εἴ τις ἄλλος τῶν γραφέων ἢ τῶν ἀγαλματοποιῶν ἐστὶν ἠθικός.*"—*Aristot. Polit.* viii. 5, 7.

[2] "*τοῖσι δ'ἐπ' ἰφθίμην Πηρὼ τέκε θαῦμα βροτοῖσι*
τὴν πάντες μνώοντο περικτίται· οὐδὲ τι Νηλεὺς
τῷ ἐδίδου ὃς μὴ ἕλικας βόας εὐρυμετώπους
ἐκ Φυλάκης ἐλάσειε βίης Ἰφικληείης."—*Od.* xi. 287-290.

Odysseus saw him[1] "standing in a mere, and the water came nigh unto his chin. And he stood straining as one athirst, but he might not attain to the water to drink of it. For often as that old man stooped down in his eagerness to drink, so often the water was swallowed up and it vanished away, and the black earth still showed at his feet, for some god parched it evermore. And tall trees flowering shed their fruit overhead, pears and pomegranates, and apple-trees with bright fruit, and sweet figs and olives in their bloom, whereat, when that old man reached out his hands to clutch them, the wind would toss them to the shadowy clouds." To this lingering torment, surely grievous enough, Polygnotus had added a more instant horror;[2] in his picture, above the old man hangs a mighty rock, ever ready to fall upon him. In this addition Pausanias says he clearly followed Archilochos; the painter and the poet were alike of Thasian birth.

[1] "καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσεῖδον χαλέπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα
ἑστεῶτ' ἐν λίμνῃ· ἡ δὲ προσέπλαζε γενείῳ·
στεῦτο δὲ διψάων, πιέειν δ'οὐχ εἶχεν ἐλέσθαι·
ὁσσάκι γὰρ κύψει' ὁ γέρων πιέειν μενεαίνων
τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀπολέσκετ' ἀναβροχὲν, ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
γαῖα μέλαινα φάνεσκε, καταζήνασκε δὲ δαίμων·
δένδρεα δ'ὑψιπέτηλα κατὰ κρῆθεν χέε καρπὸν,
ὄγχναι καὶ ῥοιαὶ καὶ μηλέαι ἀγλαόκαρποι
συκέαι τε γλυκεραὶ καὶ ἐλαῖαι τηλεθόωσαι
τῶν ὁπότ' ἰθύσει' ὁ γέρων ἐπὶ χερσὶ μάσασθαι,
τὰς δ' ἄνεμος ῥίπτασκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκιόεντα."
Od. xi. 582-590.

[2] "Τάνταλος καὶ ἄλλα ἔχων ἐστὶν ἀλγεινά ὁπόσα Ὅμηρος ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποίηκεν—ἐπὶ δὲ αὐτοῖς πρόσεστίν οἱ καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ ἐπηρτημένου λίθου δεῖμα."—Paus. x. 28. And—

"Πολύγνωτος μὲν δῆλός ἐστιν ἐπακολουθήσας τῷ Ἀρχιλόχου λόγῳ."—Paus. x. This addition brings to our mind—

"Quid memorem Lapithas, Ixiona, Pirithoumque
quos super atra silex jam jam lapsura, cadentique
imminet assimilis."—Virg. *Æn.* vi. 600-601.

As we read through the long detailed account of Pausanias we hope that, at the end, he will take some general survey, characterise the work of Polygnotus, and unfold the plan and sequence of the vast design. But no; his account closes with perhaps the vaguest, tritest, and most unsatisfactory sentence ever written by careless traveller. Great though the debt we owe him, we cannot but read with vexation,—"Such is the number of subjects depicted, and such the suitability (or beauty) of their portrayal in the picture of the Thasian artist."[1]

Much greater would have been our vexation had our purpose been purely artistic, not in the main mythological; it would then have been our harassing and most perplexing task to determine with as much precision as possible what Pausanias meant by such ever-recurring phrases as "near to this" (*τοῦ πλησίον*); "above what we have described" (*ἀνωτέρω τῶν κατειλεγμένων*); "next in order" (*ἐφεξῆς μετὰ*); "in the lower part of the picture" (*εἰς τὸ ἄνω τῆς γραφῆς*); and a host of others. This troublesome task we are spared. For mythological purposes it is enough that Pausanias distinctly names the persons represented, and that, by the help of the modern artist, some rough notion of their relative juxtaposition is clearly before our eye. Without dealing in refinements as to each particular group, we must now determine broadly the significance of these persons.

Those figures which appear in the Homeric Hades require, I think, no apology for their presence here. Such are nine of the thirteen fair women—Iphimedeia, Ariadne, Phædra, Tyro, Eriphyle, Chloris, Prokris, Clymene, Megara.

[1] "*τοσαύτη μὲν πλῆθος καὶ εὐπρεπείας ἐς τοσοῦτόν ἐστιν ἥκουσα ἡ τοῦ Θασίου γράφη.*"—PAUS. x. 28.

We are only surprised to miss the remaining four, Epikaste, Antiope, Leda, and Alkmene. In their place we have the two Pandarids, also Auge and Thyia, though I do not believe the coincidence of numbers to be intentional. The groups of Greek and Asiatic heroes are natural and indispensable in a picture which was the counterpart of another design called the Iliou persis; on the right hand of the Lesche would be Trojan and Greek in the world above; on the left Trojan and Greek in the world below. The group of Odysseus and Teiresias was necessitated by the very title of the picture—"The descent of Odysseus into Hades." Certain other figures are present probably on complimentary grounds. Tellis and Cleobeia are doubtless in part a tribute to the painter's own island, Thasos; Pelias and Schedios represent their native Phocis. The opposite ends of the picture, the prelude and the close, are occupied by groups whose significance is mainly religious. The presence of such groups is natural in a painting which decorates a hall of the temple at Delphi, the great seat of the cult of the Dorian Apollo. Vice we see punished, virtue rewarded,—specially such vices as consist in the violation of the laws of natural affection and in contempt for things sacred to the gods. The code of Apollo was a simple one: it prescribed dutiful reverence of son to father, wife to husband, all men to the gods. Among the blessed we have therefore the two young lovers who reverence their mystic cista; Antilochus, model of filial piety; Protesilaos, of conjugal fidelity; Achilles and Patroclus, of faithful friendship. Among the accursed we have a son who slew his father, a king who oppressed his subjects, a criminal who did violence to a goddess on her way to a sacred shrine.

The question has been asked more than once, What was the fundamental purport of the picture, and which in consequence is its central group? Did Polygnotus desire to realise the conception of the national poet, or to embellish local tradition, or to allegorise and embody a theory of the future state? Was his intent, in a word, poetic, historic, or doctrinally religious? Such a question appears to me to imply a sharp differentiation of modes of thought which is thoroughly and exclusively modern; we miss in these modern days much of the mutual significance of poetry, history, and religion, because we will put asunder what God and nature have joined together. We cannot, I think, look fairly from end to end of the picture of Polygnotus without feeling that the three elements are united and harmonised in proportions so subtle as to defy analysis; we may say, indeed, and we do say, that, compared with the Esquiline wall-painting, the design of Polygnotus is the more religious and the more historical of the two, the less purely mythological; but that is from its more comprehensive and complete character, not from any one-sided doctrinal emphasis.

In describing the two pictures, we have noted incidentally their chief points of contrast: it may be profitable to recapitulate. In our Esquiline landscape the human interest of the picture all centred in one group; in the Lesche picture it is dispersed among many. In the landscape the ghosts are absorbed in anxiety to have speech with Odysseus; in the Lesche picture they pursue their own occupation with marked *insouciance*. In the landscape each shade is but one of a throng, uncharacterised, except occasionally, by name; in the Lesche picture not only is each inscribed, but in most cases each is further marked out by some characteristic

attribute or gesture. Lastly, in the landscape, all the persons presented (with the exception of the Danaides) are Homeric; in the Lesche picture Polygnotus drew his heroes and heroines not only from Homer, but from other Cyclic poems — the Minyas, the Lesser Iliad, the Nostoi, the Iliou-persis, the Cypria, also from logographoi (λογῶν συνθέται) and other sources unknown even to Pausanias. These points of contrast are, we at once see, closely interdependent; they result in the main from the different artistic conditions of the centuries which respectively produced the two designs. Ability to conceive and capacity to execute act and react upon each other. The idea of a large and lovely landscape, with a group of human actors centred in the foreground, but accessory in effect, would have been a notion foreign to the mind of Polygnotus, its execution impossible to his hand. He could indicate a tree, a bit of water,—any symbol of locale; but with his four simple colours,[1]—black, white, red, yellow, with little if any forecast of the perspective of Agatharcus, or the chiaroscuro of Apollodorus,—how could he, had he wished it, have brought nature into a predominance which would have seemed to him unnatural? His triumphs—and splendid triumphs he won—were in the higher field of humanity; his it was to open the sealed lips, to lighten the darkened eyes, to relax the rigorous muscles.[2] That his design

[1] Empedokles says incidentally that the painters of his time used four colours, and by their mixture (just as nature by her four elements) produced all the desired effects. We wonder how the *blue-black* demon of Eurynomus was compounded,—how shadowy were the rushes, and how solid the phantom fishes! The lovely, though severe, effect of these four colours may be seen in such vase-paintings as the "Aphrodite on the Swan" in the British Museum.

[2] Pliny says of him that he first began "os adaperire, dentes ostendere, voltum ab antiquo rigore variare."

was strictly architectonic, his arrangement carefully balanced —that he obeyed every ancient and honoured canon of composition—we may feel sure; but to him law became ordered freedom, and, within the limits of even hieratic rigour, he knew how to give utterance to the wider ethics of idealised human character (ἦθος).

However fascinating may be the attempted reconstruction of that which is for ever lost, it is a relief to quit the unknown for the known,—to leave the fancied picture of Polygnotus and turn to the actual vase-painting, though by an inferior hand and of later date. In it we may expect to see, not indeed actual copies of the motives of particular Lesche groups, though that is possible, but some faint image, some reflection, or perhaps—for time's atmosphere is dense—some refraction of the mighty painter's thought.

In Plate 33 we have a design from a vase now in the museum at Carlsruhe. In the centre is the palace of Hades, a splendid building, rich with costly decoration. Within we see Pluton himself, with his sceptre in his hand; to the left of him Persephone, also holding a sceptre, and seated on a richly ornamented chair. By her side stands an Erinys, bearing two flaming torches; she is youthful, and wears the conventional dress of the Erinys—in late art that of a maiden huntress,—buskins on her feet, and a wild beast's skin girt about her. Lower down on the picture, and considerably to the left, are two more Erinues in similar garb; the standing one is winged and bears a twisted snake on her left arm; her companion, who has a snake, is seated on a wild beast's skin. Both are in graceful attitudes of careless repose; for a while they cease to discharge

Pl. 33

their dread functions, and why? The familiar words return to us—

> "quin ipsae stupuere domus, atque intima leti
> Tartara, caeruleosque implexae crinibus angues
> Eumenides;"

and turning again to our picture, we see why upon the "high halls of Dis" has fallen this calm unwonted,—

> "Necnon Threicius longa cum veste sacerdos
> Obloquitur numeris septem discrimina vocum,
> Jamque eadem digitis iam pectine pulsat eburno."

Surely some such figure must have met the Roman poet's eyes. Here we have the long Thracian priestly garment, while in the picture of Polygnotus Pausanias observed with surprise the mystic bard in simple Hellenic dress.

To the right of the picture is another listening group. Midway between a youth and a maiden stands a woman-figure holding an empty jar; perhaps, though for the storeage of his Formian wine Horace used most likely a rude unpainted Læstrygonian amphora, he may have seen a vase from Hellas on which some such design was depicted, for he tells us—

> "stetit urna paulum
> Sicca dum grato Danai puellas
> Carmine mulces."

Who the youth and the maiden are is uncertain; they seem to be happy souls, like Tellis and Cleobeia, unpunished in the world below.

Descending to the lower plane, we see to the left the figure of Sisyphus, already twice familiar. For the centre group, the youth with the club straining to hold the three-headed Cerberus, we turn back to Homer, and hear Odysseus

tell of the "phantom of mighty Heracles." "About him was there a clamour of the dead, as it were fowls flying every way in fear, and he, like black Night, with bow uncased, and shaft upon the string, fiercely glancing around, like one in act to shoot. And about his breast was an awful belt, a baldric of gold, whereon wondrous things were wrought—bears and wild boars, and lions with flashing eyes, and strife and battles, and slaughters and manslayings. Nay, after fashioning this, never another may he fashion, whoso stored in his craft the device of this belt."[1] No Hellenic artist of Homer's days, we are now sure, could have fashioned this wondrous belt. Homer must have seen, and, with a poet's fancy, grouped, the splendid and delicate handiwork of some Phœnician craftsmen.[2] On our vase-painting all this magnificence of dress and circumstance is wanting. We see Herakles, not arrayed as a triumphant conqueror, who "hath to wife Hebe of the fair ankles," and sits for ever at the "banquet of the deathless gods," but still militant, toiling at the hardest of his labours. He tells his story to Odysseus.

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices. Ah, wretched one, dost thou too lead such a life of evil doom as I bore beneath the rays of the sun? I was the son of Zeus Cronion, yet I had trouble beyond measure, for I was subdued unto a man far worse than I. And he enjoined on me hard adventures; yea, and on a time he sent me hither to bring back the hound of hell; for he devised no harder task for me than this. I lifted the hound

[1] *Od.* xi. 604.

[2] Mr. C. T. Newton's, *Essays on Archæology*, p. 272; and Dr. Schliemann's *Discoveries at Mycenæ.*

and brought him forth from out of the house of Hades; and Hermes sped me on my way, and the gray-eyed Athene." [1]

In our picture Hermes, unmistakeable from his caduceus, speeds the hero on his way; and we should like to think that to the right the woman who lights the dark pathway with her torch is the "gray-eyed Athene;" but the dress and attributes forbid us, and we are left to suppose she is the dreadful Hecate who performs for once this friendly office. Behind her stands a female figure, of uncertain significance, possibly Alkmene.

Far less easy of determination are the figures grouped on either side in the topmost plane—a matron and two very young boys to the left, two youths on the right. The intent of these groups would be wholly obscure but for our knowledge of two other vases of very similar design; one of these fortunately has its figures inscribed. From a comparison of these we learn with certainty that the matron seated to the left is Megara, the wife of Herakles, with her two sons; and the group to the right represents Orestes and Pylades; possibly their presence indicates the vengeance that follows upon crime. The existence of these three similar vases, of which unhappily we are only able to offer one, makes it almost certain that they are copies from some great original, now lost, by some master other than Polygnotus.

Viewing the design figured in Plate 33 as a whole, it affords us an excellent specimen of the characteristics of late though still very fine ceramography. We see with regret that art, while it has attained freedom and dexterity, has

[1] *Od.* xi. 617.

lost its early severe beauty. The field is overcrowded; there is a striving after pictorial effect which is out of harmony with the tectonic conditions and limits of the vase surface. The heaping together of successive scenes, raised tier above tier, is an attempt at the perspective of distance; but it leaves the eye weary with a crowded impression very different from the restful effect of the early, simple grouping. The general treatment, too, of the draperies and accessories is over luxuriant. Witness the almost sensational splendour of the winged Erinys,[1] and the gorgeous attire of the Thracian bard. It is curious to note how Greek artists at first patiently evolved for themselves out of Phœnician complexity a simplicity truly Hellenic, and then, when perfection was attained, rapidly reverted to a complexity which became at last almost barbaric. At present that sad period of decadence still seems far away. The figures of Sisyphus, of Hermes, most of all of Herakles, while showing complete mastery of outline, are full of strength; and Cerberus shows us that a three-headed dog need be no monster.

Turning from the manner to the matter of our picture, it is evident, I think, that here, far more than in the Polygnotus picture, the presence and functions of Orpheus are emphasised. There he was depicted simply playing on his lyre "upon a certain hill,"[2] with musicians grouped

[1] These Erinys figures seem to have come much into fashion on vase-paintings, possibly in consequence of the scenic effects in the Eumenides of Æschylus. Later, we know from Demosthenes that Hades was peopled, modern fashion, with a whole crew of impersonated horrors:—"μεθ' ὧν δ' οἱ ζωγράφοι τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς ἐν Ἅιδου γράφουσι μετὰ τούτων μέτ' Ἀρᾶς καὶ Βλασφημίας καὶ Φθόνου καὶ Στάσεως καὶ Νείκους περιέρχεται."—*Cont. Arist.* i. p. 489 (786).

[2] "ἐπὶ λόφου τινος"—a hill probably indicated by the conventional dotted lines, such as occur in our vase-picture.

around listening, as they might on earth; here he chains the attention of Pluto and Persephone, the dread gods of Hades, and the Erinues cease their work to listen. Herakles is present, perhaps, as a sort of heroic counterpart to Orpheus,—what the musician availed to do by his music the hero achieved by pure strength; but in tracing analogies in vase-painting we tread on slippery ground. Orpheus would still more certainly be the central figure of the design, could we determine more clearly that the uppermost groups have relation to Orphic mysteries and initiation; but here we must be content for the present to doubt.

Turning to Plate 34, we have another vase-painting the Orphic significance of which is unmistakeable. The design is from a large krater now in the British Museum, of presumably about the same date as our last picture (*i.e.* somewhere in the fourth or early part of the third century B.C.) Here we have no palace of Persephone; we are sure, however, that we are in the under world, for we see Cerberus; also we notice a tall slender tree, which rears its crown of leaves to the upper world, where are grouped in graceful conclave Pan and Hermes, Aphrodite and Eros; and we remember that in the picture of Polygnotus Orpheus leant against a tree. Possibly this is a reminiscence, or it may be taken direct from Homer, who tells, as we know, of the "groves of Persephone, even tall poplar trees and willows, that shed their fruit before the season."[1] Close to this tree is Orpheus; in the one hand he holds his lyre, which he reaches out to an approaching boy, with the other he restrains Cerberus, who is about to fall on the new-comer. Orpheus, we

[1] "ἄλσεα Περσεφονείης
μακραὶ τ' αἴγειροι καὶ ἰτέαι ὠλεσίκαρποι."—*Od.* x. 509.

remember, had power by his music to sway the hound of hell.[1] And who, we ask, is the youth who approaches, led by an older man? Surely a boy who, early instructed by his father in the mysteries of the holy religion of Orpheus, is initiated in the world above, and, dying, is welcomed by the author of his faith to the world below. The lyre is offered no doubt with reference to some ritual detail of initiation now lost to us, but this gesture seems the intelligible and natural symbol of union and complete fruition. The female figure to the right of Orpheus some have thought to be the pious mother of the boy, gone home before him; more likely it is Eurydike, though her presence here has no special significance.

We might multiply examples, but these two vase-paintings, out of a multitude which represent scenes from the lower world, will serve our purpose, namely, to see how, as time went on, the simple epic conception of Hades became transformed by complex religious associations, by the influence of creeds and doctrines, to the mysteries of which we no longer hold the clue. Our latest art monument, the Esquiline landscape in Autotype VI., we placed first, partly because it dealt with the opening scene of our myth, but chiefly because it was in spirit the most simple and Homeric. A thing so lovely in itself as this landscape we may not call *ir*religious, but it is certainly *non*-religious, the work of a man who either has no creed, or is not concerned artistically to enforce it.

In this Greek Hades we have, as we see, traces of

[1] "Cessat immanis tibi blandienti
Janitor aulæ
Cerberus." HORAT. *Carm.* iii. 11, 14.

growing doctrinal mysticism; we have also the downright expression of righteous retribution which overtakes the grievous criminal; but still in the main the under world atmosphere is serene, even cheerful. We must turn now to Italy, and visit the ghosts of another, a more gloomy land, grim Etruria.

However much Etrurian conceptions were modified by the influence of the traditions of pure Greek art, there still remains about them for the most part a touch of the grotesque, the horrible. We constantly miss that Hellenic euphemism, that quick instinct for beauty and limit, which prompts the true Greek artist to conceal deformity and soften terror.

The pictures before us (in Plates 35 and 36) are from the second chamber of the Tomba dell Orco at Corneto. Of the three chambers into which the tomb is divided, one, the second, is entirely decorated with scenes from the under world. Space forbids us to give the whole, but our two examples are chosen as specially characteristic of Etrurian thought. Let us turn to Plate 35. To the right we have the Theban seer again inscribed, much the same as in the Etruscan mirror (see Plate 29), with very mysterious letters. He leans upon a staff, something of anxious weakness in his posture. He wears the long prophetic veil; his eyes are closed; his head droops slightly, with the same expression of dreamy blindness we noted in the mirror. In fact in the whole figure the pathos of blindness is very forcibly expressed. The beard and hair are luxuriant and curl softly. The colouring of the drapery is somewhat dull and austere.

In contrast to this venerable seer of sad and feeble aspect comes a figure on whom, even though inadequately

painted by an Etruscan artist, we may not look without the keenest emotion,—Memnon, "goodly Memnon" the most beautiful man of all the ancient world.[1] He is inscribed MEMRUN, and he is here represented in the full glory of manhood; long curling hair falls upon his shoulders and circles his forehead. Once already we have met him in the Hades of Polygnotos. Why he now stands so near to Teiresias we cannot tell. Probably the juxtaposition is merely accidental. Both at this moment are in strange company. On either side of Teiresias are reed-like, branching trees; on the tree to the left strange pigmy black figures are climbing and clinging in every manner of grotesque, jocund attitude; one swings suspended by his hand, one swarms a branch, one stands balancing himself. Who are these strange black pigmies? we may well ask, and no certain answer can be given. Some have thought they are tiny Ethiopians, present, like the two negro boys in the Lesche picture, more clearly to identify Memnon. This seems improbable. Others recall the mighty elm Æneas saw in Hades, thronged with the clustering phantoms of vain dreams—

> "In medio ramos, annosaque brachia pandit
> Ulmus opaca, ingens; quam sedem Somnia vulgo
> Vana tenere ferunt, *foliisque sub omnibus hærent.*"
>
> VIRG. *Æn.* vi. 282-284.

Perhaps the most probable solution is that the pigmies are tiny souls. We know that it was the custom of Greek art to represent the soul as a tiny winged figure fluttering above the body it had left. Still we wonder to see these

[1] Achilles says of Eurypylus—

"κεῖνον δὴ κάλλιστον ἴδον μετὰ Μέμνονα δῖον."—*Od.* xi. 522.

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Pl. 35.

souls, if such they be, disporting themselves after the fashion of imps and gnomes. But such unseemly pranks accord not ill with the grim humour of Etrurian.

Humour, however grim, deserts us in our second Etruscan wall-picture. Turning to Plate 36, we find horror unrelieved by any lighter touch. Here we have an infernal demon of truly Etruscan pattern—a frightful shape, with open mouth to show his grinning teeth. He has great wings, and strides on holding in both his hands a large hammer. He looks like one of the "workmen" (faber) who, Plutarch tells us,[1] torture with their tools the souls of the covetous below. The flesh of this demon is of greenish hue; his nose is hooked like an eagle's beak, about his shoulders are serpents, and the fierce monster is made more beast-like by his satyr's ear. All these dreadful details are drawn with considerable force and delicacy, as if the subject were much to the artist's liking. The limbs are full and round, the muscles peculiarly well emphasised. We ask at once who the demon is. The inscription helps us but little, though it confirms what is undoubtedly the right solution. One letter only remains, the archaic equivalent of the letter X. When we read of the green flesh, the grinning teeth, at once we remember the Delphic demon Eurynomos, and our thoughts are carried still further back to the fabled shield of Herakles, on which Hesiod tells us[2] the "Keres" were

[1] Plutarch de sera num vindict. cap. 22.

[2] Κῆρες κνάνεαι, λευκοὺς ἀραβεῦσαι ὀδόντας,
δεινωποὶ βλοσυροί τε δαφοινοί τ' ἀπλητοί τε
δῆριν ἔχον περὶ πιπτόντων, πᾶσαι δ' ἄρ' ἵεντο
αἷμα μέλαν πιέειν· ὃν δὲ πρῶτον μεμάποιεν
κείμενον ἢ πίπτοντα νεούτατον ἀμφὶ μὲν αὐτῷ
βάλλ' ὄνυχας μεγάλους.—Hesiod, *Scut.*, 249-254.

graven, demons worthy to be the ancestors of Eurynomos; they too were of blue-black colour, with mighty claws, and they ground their white teeth, waiting to drink the black blood of the slain. One of these same monsters was sculptured, Pausanias tells us,[1] on the chest of Cypselos.

Archaic art seems to have dealt somewhat freely in these terrible impersonations, but later Hellenic art with its euphemistic tendencies kept such horrors in the background, though still we have fantastic furies such as we have noted on our vase-painting (Plate 33). But in Etruria, the proper home of grotesque terror, all such creations found an appropriate dwelling-place. Even the harmless waterman Charon, who at worst in Hellas is somewhat churlish and uncouth, is in Etruria transformed into a minister of torture to the damned, the very monster before us. How the transformation was effected it is not easy to trace, but we have already noted that Charon has met with a similar fate in modern Hellas. Perhaps it was only for a few happy centuries, when beauty reigned supreme, that even the Greeks could resist the strong doctrinal impulse which besets mankind to people hell with horrors.

For such horrors Etruria shall suffice. Time forbids us to descend with Æneas down the easy steep of Avernus, nor may we question the tortured ghosts that dwell in Dante's *Inferno*, nor yet the devils that plot and plan in the Pandemonium of Milton. It is rash to tarry so long in Hades, lest the dim uncertain twilight baffle and daze us,

[1] τῶν δὲ Οἰδίποδος παίδων Πολυνείκει πεπτωκότι ἐς γόνυ ἔπεισιν Ἐτεοκλῆς. τοῦ Πολυνείκους δὲ ὄπισθεν ἕστηκεν ὀδόντας τε ἔχουσα οὐδὲν ἡμερωτέρους θηρίου, καὶ οἱ καὶ τῶν χειρῶν εἰσιν ἐπικαμπεῖς οἱ ὄνυχες ἐπίγραμμα δὲ ἐπ' αὐτῇ εἶναί φασι Κῆρα.—Paus. v. 17.

Pl. 36.

and we behold no longer clearly the light of the upper world. Let us remember the caution of the simple-hearted Odysseus: "And pale fear gat hold of me lest the high goddess Persephone should send me the head of the Gorgon, that dread monster from out of Hades."

The light of the upper world streams in again as we read, "Straightway then I went to the ship, and bade my men mount the vessel and loose the hawsers. So speedily they went on board, and sat upon the benches, and the wave of the flood bore the bark down the stream of Oceanus, we rowing first, and afterwards the fair wind was our convoy." [1]

[1] *Od.* xi. 635.

V

THE MYTH OF THE SIRENS

"Vobis Acheloides unde
Pluma pedesque avium cum virginis ora geratis?"

We do not propose to content ourselves with Ovid's answer, but his question strikes the key-note to our investigations. It is well that we should bear this in mind from the outset, for, in the juxtaposition of literary and artistic monuments of the Sirens, we have to prepare ourselves for a distinct æsthetic shock. Homer leaves us somehow with a vision of sea maidens whose form we fancy must be fair because their song is sweet. Yet the design on our first Siren vase (in Plate 37) is more quaint than beautiful. We turn, perhaps with something akin to disgust, from these hybrid bird-woman creatures with heavy wings and awkward flight, and ask almost indignantly, Why care to investigate an art whose sole purport seems to be degradation? But a closer inquiry, here as elsewhere, will modify our views; we shall learn to see that our conception even of Homer's Sirens loses nothing, and by antithesis gains much; we shall feel that these quaint forms which at first so vex our imagination have a strange beauty, a deep moral and religious significance of their own, which the conditions of Homer's art and time alike forbade.

Let us examine the Homeric story, and briefly call to

mind how first the warning against the song of the Sirens fell on the ears of Odysseus. At a moment surely strange and fateful enough: by the might of Circe he has fared back in safety from his descent to Hades; the banquet ended, she takes him by the hand and leads him apart, away from his dear comrades; he tells her all his tale, and then, as she lies at his feet for the last time, as the sun sinks and the darkness falls, in the mystery of night, she warns him of the dread perils to come, and first of the Sirens.

"Then at last the lady Circe spoke unto me, saying, To the Sirens first shalt thou come, who bewitch all men; whosoever shall come to them, whoso draws nigh them unwittingly and hears the sound of the Sirens' voice, never doth he see wife or babes stand by him on his return, nor have they joy at his coming; but the Sirens enchant him with their clear song (sitting in the meadow), and all about is a great heap of bones of men, corrupt in death, and round the bones the skin is wasting. But do thou drive thy ship past, and knead honey-sweet wax, and anoint therewith the ears of thy company, lest any of the rest hear the song; but if thou thyself art minded to hear, let them bind thee in the swift ship, hand and foot, upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast let rope-ends be tied, that with delight thou mayest hear the voice of the Sirens. And if thou shalt beseech thy company and bid them to loose thee, then let them bind thee with yet more bonds." [1]

So much for the warning. When the dark-prowed ship is fairly on its way, Odysseus, with a heavy heart, tells his companions of the oracles of Circe, that they may the better escape from the coming peril.

[1] *Od.* xii. 40-54.

"First she bade us avoid the sound of the voice of the wondrous Sirens and their field of flowers, and me only she bade listen to their voices. So bind ye me in a hard bond, that I may abide unmoved in my place, upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast let rope-ends be tied; and if I beseech and bid you to set me free, then do ye straiten me with yet more bonds.

"Thus I rehearsed these things, one and all, and declared them to my company. Meanwhile our good ship quickly came to the island of the Sirens twain, for a gentle breeze sped her on her way. Then straightway the wind ceased, and lo! there was a windless calm, and some god lulled the waves. Then my company rose up and drew in the ship's sails, and stowed them in the hold of the ship, while they sat at the oars and whitened the water with their polished ashen blades. But I with my sharp sword cleft in pieces a great circle of wax, and with my strong hands kneaded it. And soon the wax grew warm, for that my great might constrained it, and the beam of the lord Helios, son of Hyperion. And I anointed therewith the ears of all my men in their order; and in the ship they bound me, hand and foot, upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast they fastened rope-ends, and themselves sat down and smote the gray sea-water with their oars. But when the ship was within the sound of a man's shout from the land, we fleeing swiftly on our way, the Sirens espied the swift ship speeding toward them, and they raised their clear-toned song:

"Hither, come hither, renowned Odysseus, great glory of the Achæans; here stay thy bark, that thou mayst listen to the voice of us twain. For none hath ever driven by this way in his black ship till he hath heard from our lips the

voice, sweet as the honeycomb, and hath had joy thereof, and gone on his way the wiser. For lo, we know all things, all the travail that in wide Troy-land the Argives and Trojans bare by the gods' designs; yea, we know all that shall hereafter be upon the fruitful earth.

"So spake they, uttering a sweet voice, and my heart was fain to listen, and I bade my company unbind me, nodding at them with bent brows, but they leant forward and rowed on. Then straight uprose Perimedes and Eurylochus and bound me with more cords, and straitened me yet the more. Now when we had driven past them, nor heard we any longer the sound of the Sirens and their song, forthwith my dear company took away the wax wherewith I had anointed their ears, and loosed me from my bonds."[1]

No word as to the form of these mysterious Sirens, no hint of their parentage; without father, without mother—a voice and nothing more:

> . . . "Their words are no more known aright,
> Through lapse of many ages, and no man
> Can any more across the waters wan
> Behold these singing women of the sea."

Had Homer let us espy them for a moment, as they espied Odysseus, we might have had knowledge for wonder, but he left them to us, all the more haunting, the more beguiling, because shrouded in mystery, the mystery of the hidden things of the sea, with the haze of the noontide about them, and the meshes of sweet music for their unseen toils,—knowing all things, yet themselves for ever unknown. Nor is the manner of the death of their victims more clearly told. If, smitten with fell desire for knowledge, they

[1] *Od.* xii. 153-200.

hearken to the forbidden song, they must die,—as, in the Semitic saga, they perish who taste of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge; as, in the Egyptian story, destruction falls on him who wins for himself the Book of Thoth, wherein is all wisdom,—die not at once, but by a slow wasting; life is sapped away as with some dire disease; the hapless seafarer is cut off henceforth from all simple, human, wholesome joys of wife and babe, and consumed by a barren desire. Still, except for Circe's warning, the "heap of bones corrupt in death," horror is kept in the background, seduction only to the fore. We think of the Sirens as fair, baneful maidens, or possibly, influenced by modern art, as of mermaid shape, certainly not as hybrid monsters, half bird, half woman. The plastic art of Homer's days has, so far as we know, left us no Siren image whereby to frame our conception.[1]

A long leap in time, a longer interval of thought, brings us to our first art presentation, figured in Plate 37, the design on the obverse of an amphora now in the British Museum. Odysseus is tied to the mast of his ship, which passes between two rocks, on either of which is perched a Siren; a third Siren flies downwards, possibly with intent to seize one of the crew, or in despair at the failure of her song. The Sirens are represented with the bodies of birds and large claws, female heads with long hair confined by a

[1] Most in harmony with the conception we naturally frame of Homer's Sirens is the representation figured in Plate 46, belonging to a late period of art, when imitation of literary description was conscious and deliberate. The plate will be described later. Eustathius says quaintly, commenting on the Homeric Sirens, "*οὗτοι δὲ καὶ πτερωτὰς αὐτὰς πλάττουσιν οὐ μὴν οὕτω καὶ ὁ ποιήτης—ἦ γὰρ ἂν ἐδίωξαν τὸν Ὀδυσσέα παρελάσαντα προσπετόμεναι, εἴ γε πτεροῖς διῳκοῦντο.*"

Pl. 37.

sphendone; the hair falls in a curious formal tress in front of the ear. Over the left-hand Siren her name is written, ΗΙΜΕΡΟΓΑ, "lovely voiced." Odysseus himself is naked; his hands are bound to the mast; he looks up toward the Sirens as if attracted; his beard is pointed; he wears a wreath, not the seaman's cap which is his characteristic in later times; in front of him is inscribed ΟΛΥΣΕΥΣ. The crew are all bearded; two of the rowers and the steersman wear wreaths, the other two diadems. The heads of only four rowers appear, but on the side of the ship are seven rowlocks and six oars; the mast has a sail attached—it is reefed up; and to the yard are fastened many ropes. The prow is decorated with a large eye. The steersman seated in the stern gives the word of command with his right hand; he is naked to the waist; from the aphlaston hangs an embroidered, fringed drapery. The design is in dull red on a black ground, accessories in brown and crimson; the style of work stiff and early. On the reverse are figured three youthful loves floating over the land; later on we shall note the love aspect of the Sirens.

The artist has clearly had in his mind, in the obverse design, the Odyssey story, but there are discrepancies in detail; the reefed sail,[1] the eager exertion of the rowers,[2] are true to Homer; Odysseus is rightly bound straight upright to the mast.[3] On the other hand, Homer speaks of his Sirens in the dual:[4] here they are three. In Homer

[1] "*ἱστία μηρύσαντο.*"—*Od.* xii. 170.

[2] "*αὐτοὶ δ' ἐξόμενοι πολιὴν ἅλα τύπτον ἐρετμοῖς.*"—xii. 180.

[3] "*ὀρθὸν ἐν ἱστοπέδῃ.*"—xii. 179.

[4] "*Νῆσον Σειρήνοιιν.*"—xii. 167. Dual Sirens appear on a lekythos figured in Stackelberg's *Gräber der Hellenen*, but the number is probably accidental.

they dwell in a meadow:[1] here we have steep bare rocks; possibly, however, the representation of the meadow may have been avoided as too pictorial. Homer makes the Sirens, when their song has once fairly failed to attract, let the ship go by in peace: here a Siren seems to swoop down with warlike intent, aggressive, not merely seductive.[2] The eye in the prow is possibly prophylactic, of Egyptian origin. Similar designs occur frequently on vases; probably, in the case of a ship, there is the special symbolism of foresight for the journey.[3] The kredemnon, *i.e.* the sacred fringed drapery, is foreign to the Odyssey story. The Scholiast on Apoll. Rhod. i. 907, says that Odysseus was initiated into the Samothracian mysteries, and this kredemnon may possibly have been meant to have some sacred significance.

[1] "Ἥμεναι ἐν λειμῶνι."—xii. 45.

[2] Since writing the above my attention has been drawn (by Mr. Cecil Smith of the British Museum) to the peculiar depiction of the *eye* of this third Siren. Two strokes form the outline; the pupil is wholly absent. The effect is that of a closed or blind eye. On another vase in the Museum the sightless eyes of Phineus are drawn in exactly the same manner. Tradition after Homer fabled that when the *Argonauts* had passed in safety, the Sirens, in despair, threw themselves into the sea, and were transformed into rocks. It seems probable that the artist had this account in his mind, and by a curious prolepsis has anticipated for one tempter this future fate. Two moments are, according to this theory, combined in one, the temptation proffered, and the subsequent self-destruction of the tempters. It has not escaped former commentators that the whole gesture of the third Siren was rather of despair than attack; but the additional and, I think, conclusive evidence of the closed eye has never, I believe, been pointed out. If this explanation be correct, our *three* vase Sirens are of course reduced in the most satisfactory way to the Homeric *two*.

[3] Cp. "καὶ πρῷρα πρόσθεν ὄμμασι βλέπουσ' ὁδόν."—Æsch. *Ik.* 716.

Or again—

"ὅστις φυλάσσει πρᾶγος ἐν πρύμνῃ πόλεως
οἴακα νωμῶν, βλέφαρα μὴ κοιμῶν ὑπνῳ."—Æsch. *Theb.* 3.

We note, as regards the bare rocks on which the Sirens perch, that the vase-painting is in accord with later tradition. Virgil speaks of the "rocks of the Sirens, cruel in bygone days, and white with the bones of many."[1] Our vase gives no indication of "the bones of many," but if we turn to Plate 38, we shall find this ghastly detail faithfully portrayed. The design is from a Pompeian wall-painting, executed some three hundred years after our vase, and now in the British Museum. The colours are dim in the original, but we can make out steep cliffs rising to either side, and an almost phantom ship that glides between. Usually in Pompeian painting we find the poet's story faithfully depicted in all minutiæ, but here, as on our vase, the Sirens are three, not two, as in Homer. Early tradition seems to have fixed this number three too firmly in the popular mind for the fresco-painter to dare its contradiction. The Sirens are represented as gaunt giant-birds, with human face; here, again, the painter chooses the accepted conventional form, though in art so late we might have expected a more euphemistic depiction,—fair maiden tempters, such as we shall later meet on an Etruscan sarcophagus. The topmost Siren on the right hand plays a double flute, the one to the left a lyre, the third Siren, on a lower cliff, has no instrument; no doubt she sings, accompanied by the other two; about her are strewn the bleached bones and skulls. The boat of Odysseus is a richly ornamented Roman galley; he himself is bound high up on the mast above the heads of his comrades. We are irresistibly reminded that, some two or three cen-

[1] "Jamque adeo scopulos Sirenum advecta subibat
Difficiles quondam multorumque ossibus albos."—Virg. *Æn.* v. 864.

turies after the date of our picture, Odysseus became, in the hands of Christian artists, the symbol of a crucified Christ, who was uplifted that he might draw all men to him. It is difficult to judge of the colour effects of the picture, so marred is it by the lapse of time; but as we see it now, the dull blue water, the dim galley, the white-patched rocks, streaked and splashed with red, are grim and ghastly, and the bird-woman tempters seem rather terrible than alluring.

Leaving the Sirens of Homer, we come to a later version of the same myth. The story of the passage of the Argonauts told by Apollonius Rhodius, though plainly an imitation of Homer, is marked by many significant differences in conception. The Sirens still dwell in their "flowery island," which corresponds to the "meadow" of Homer; but they no longer come to us unfathered, out of the unknown past; learning and mythology have been at work to provide them with a pedigree, and in literature, as well as art, with a conventional shape. Possibly Apollonius Rhodius himself may have pondered over the vase, or a twin brother, that we have considered in Plate 37; his poem would be written, roughly speaking, about two hundred years after its execution. The clear-voiced Sirens are now Acheloïdes, daughters of Achelous, the great river god, and of the muse Terpsichore.[1] He tells us how of old they played with Persephone in the vale of Enna, and from that time, when they lost their fair play-

[1] "αἶψα δὲ νῆσον
καλὴν, ἀνθεμοέσσαν ἐσέδρακον, ἔνθα λίγειαι
Σειρῆνες σίνοντ' Ἀχελωΐδες, ἠδείῃσιν
θέλγουσαι μολπῇσιν, ὅτις παρὰ πεῖσμα βάλοιτο.
τὰς μὲν ἄρ' εὐειδὴς Ἀχελωΐῳ εὐνηθεῖσα
γείνατο Τερψιχόρη, Μουσέων μία."

Apoll. Rhod. iv. 889-894.

Pl. 38.

mate, they were changed into monsters, part bird, part woman.[1] Possibly Apollonius Rhodius was perplexed by the conflict between literary and artistic tradition. He may have wished to copy Homer, but a thousand representations of bird-woman sirens would force him to portray the familiar figure.

We have taken the Argonautic and Odyssean story in close connection because of their obvious analogies; we must retrace the intervening ground, and watch the Sirens fulfilling other and widely different functions; reserving for final consideration, and, we hope, partial solution, the problem, how this strange artistic form came to be the recognised representation of the beguiling Siren, and also some fuller investigation of the nature and origin of the myth.

Next in order of date to the Odyssey story comes a fragment of Erinna, an epitaph written for her girl friend Baukis. Only the first line immediately concerns us, but we may be pardoned if we forbear to mutilate verses so graceful:—

"Pillars of death! carved Sirens! tearful urns!
In whose sad keeping my poor dust is laid,
To him who near my tomb his footsteps turns,
Stranger or Greek, bid hail! and say a maid

Rests in her tomb below; her sire the name
Of Baukis gave; her birth and lineage high:
And say her bosom friend Erinna came
And on this tomb engraved her elegy."[2]

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[1] "τότε δ' ἄλλο μὲν οἰωνοῖσιν,
ἄλλο δὲ παρθενικῆς ἐναλίγκιαι ἔσκον ἰδέσθαι."
Apoll. Rhod. *Arg.* iv. 896-897.

[2] "στᾶλαι, καὶ Σειρῆνες ἐμαὶ, καὶ πένθιμε κρωσσὲ,
ὅστις ἔχεις Ἀΐδα τὰν ὀλίγαν σποδιὰν,

Here we have the Sirens addressed, together with the funeral pillars and the funeral vase, possibly a cinerary urn. They are bidden to tell the passer-by the story of her who lay below the funeral mound. The conjunction seems a strange one, but if we turn to Plate 39 we may indeed still wonder why the muse of song and seduction, the "improba Siren," should be chosen to discharge a duty so sombre, but the *fact* we may no longer doubt. There she stands on the funeral stele with the lyre in her hand, making sweet music, serious indeed, as befits her station, but, as of old, beguiling—so beguiling that two grave, bearded men, and, quainter still, two thoughtless dogs, halt by her side, alike spellbound, to listen. The design is from the obverse of a vase found at Melos, and now in the British Museum. The style is archaic, stiff, but full of strength and purpose. The eyes in all three profiles are full-face; from the three heads branch out the curious tree-like decorations frequent in early art.

This funeral aspect of the Sirens is a very frequent one both in art and literature. Stone Sirens stood on the tomb of the lovely Kleo, noted in an epigram by Mnasalcas;[1] over the grave of his beloved Hephæstion, Alexander the Great raised hollow Siren-figures in which were hidden the

τοῖς ἐμὸν ἐρχομένοισι παρ᾽ ἠρίον εἴπατε χαίρειν,
αἴτ᾽ ἀστοὶ τελέθωντ᾽, αἴθ᾽ ἑτέρας πόλιος·
χὤτι με νύμφαν εὖσαν ἔχει τάφος, εἴπατε καὶ τό·
χὤτι πατήρ μ᾽ ἐκάλει Βανκίδα, χὤτι γένος
Τηνία, ὡς εἰδῶντι· καὶ ὅτι μοὶ ἁ συνεταιρίς
Ἥριννᾰ ἐν τύμβῳ γράμμ᾽ ἐχάραξε τόδε."

Translated by Elton.

[1] Mnasalkas, *Anth. Pal.*, vii. 491:—

"αἰαῖ παρθενίας ὀλοόφρονος, ἃς ἄπο φαιδρὰν
ἔκλασας ἁλικίαν, ἱμερόεσσα Κλεοῖ·
καδδέ σ᾽ ἀμοξάμεναι περιδάκρυοι αἵδ᾽ ἐπὶ τύμβῳ
λᾶες Σειρήνων ἔσταμες εἰδάλιμοι."

Pl. 39.

musicians who were to make lamentation;[1] Sirens watched over the funeral mounds of Sophokles and Isokrates. The Romans preferred for the decoration of their sarcophagi, not simple Siren-figures, but elaborate groupings embodying some Siren myth. The Etruscans sculptured for funeral purposes the Odyssey story only, and their Sirens take a purely human form.

Strangely enough, about the streets of Athens there may still be heard songs which tell of three birds (*τρία πουλάκια*) who chant a death-song from the under world. Sometimes one only sings, and she has not indeed a human face, but a human voice (*Μὸν ἐλαλοῦσε κ' ἔλεγεν ἀνθρωπινὴ λαλίτσα*),[2] another tells how she has seen Charos (Charon) on his black steed dragging his victims below, old men and youths and children. Another more terrible still has blood-red claws and death-black wings. If these terrible monsters be indeed the descendants of our placid Sirens, modern Hellas must have created for herself a new and more sensational Hades whence they may fitly come.

Returning to our old-world Sirens, we note that their funeral aspect is significant in many ways; it links these Sirens with the Muses who were wont to lament over dead

[1] "*ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ ἐφειστήκεισαν Σειρῆνες διάκοιλοι καὶ δυνάμεναι λεληθότως δέξασθαι τοὺς ἐν αὐταῖς ὄντας καὶ ἄδοντας ἐπικήδειον θρῆνον τῷ τετελευτηκότι.*"—Diod. xvii. 115.

[2] See the song "*ὁ ποταμός τῶν νεκρῶν*," and also the "*εἰδήσεις ἀπὸ τὸν Ἀιδην*," which begins as follows :—

"*ἕνα πουλάκι ξέβγαινεν ἀπὸ τὸν κάτω κόσμο·*
εἶχε τὰ νύχια κόκκινα καὶ τα φτερά τοῦ μαῦρα
τὰ νύχι' ἀπὸ τὰ αἵματα καὶ τὰ φτερ' ἀπ' τὸ χῶμα."

Translated by Passow, *Neugriechische Volkslieder*, p. 55 :—

"Es kam einst aus der Unterwelt ein Vogel hergeflogen,
Der hatte Klauen purpurroth, schwartz waren seine Flügel,
An seinen Klauen haftet Blut das Grab an seinen Flügel."

heroes,[1] and gives a new significance to their chthonic parentage. The hapless Helen in her sorrow calls aloud, "Alas, ye wing-bearing maidens, virgins, daughters of Earth, ye Sirens, would that ye might come at my cry, holding the Libyan reed or the syrinx;"[2] and she prays that Persephone may send them to weep with her in her sorrow. Here their evil aspect is obscured, they are the austere ministrants of the dread queen of Hades.

Most frequently in art they appear as actually part of the funeral monument, but occasionally as detached figures, mourners, or mere symbols of the sadness of the scene depicted. Such a scene is the vase-painting in Plate 40; and here the Siren has a peculiar fitness, for the tale is of love as well as death,[3] the myth of Prokris and Kephalos. Prokris, distrustful of her husband's faith, follows him to the hunting-ground, and dies by his unwitting hand. In the centre of the scene she is depicted falling, pierced by the spear of Kephalos. He stands to the left, and strikes his forehead as in despair; on the right hand is Erechtheus,

[1] "ἀλλά οἱ παρά τε πυρὰν τάφον θ' Ἑλικώνιαι παρθένοι
στάν, ἐπὶ θρῆνον τε πολύφαμον ἔχεαν."—PIND. *Isth.* vii. 57.

[2] EURIP. *Hel.* 167:—

"ἔ ἔ
πτεροφόροι νεάνιδες
παρθένοι, χθονὸς κόραι
Σειρῆνες, εἴθ' ἐμοῖς γόοις
μόλοιτ' ἔχουσαι τὸν Λίβυν
λωτὸν ἢ σύριγγας, αἰλίνοις κακοῖς
τοῖς ἐμοῖσι σύνοχα δάκρυα
πάθεσι πάθεα, μέλεσι μέλεα
μουσεῖα τε θρηνήμασι ξυνῳδὰ
πέμψειε Φερσέφασσα
φόνια."

[3] The story, which formed the subject of a lost tragedy by Sophokles, is given in full by Ovid, *Met.* vii. 687-758.

Pl. 40.

father of Prokris. It is quite in the Greek manner to collect for presentation the persons interested, even if not actually present. Prokris wears the full double-sleeved chiton, girt at the waist; she has fallen on her knees, and faintly tries to draw out the spear; her head sinks on her shoulder. Kephalos holds in a leash the dog Lailaps, the gift given him by Prokris in the early trustful days, before she learned to misdoubt his hunting. Just above the dying Prokris hovers a bird with human head—a Siren,[1] symbol of love and mourning, here with no sinister intent. The presence of this Siren would, to the Greek eye, at once mark the funeral aspect of the scene. The vase is now in the British Museum; the design red on black, the execution somewhat rough and clumsy.

Before we leave the Sirens in this their sombre and, it may have seemed, incongruous aspect, we must add a word of explanation. It is hard for us, with our Christian associations, deepened to a gloomier austerity by Puritan training, to feel with the Greeks about death and funeral ceremonies; but if we wish to understand them at all we must cultivate this historical sympathy. When our dead go away, it is much if we strew a few flowers, if we forego our wonted hearse

[1] As such the human-headed bird is interpretred by Stephani, "Compte Rendu," 1866. This interpretation I have adopted, after much deliberation, as seemingly most consonant with the spirit of Greek art. Two other alternative explanations are offered:—

1st, The human-headed bird may represent the soul of Prokris escaping from her body. This would be quite in the manner of Egyptian presentation (see Plate 50*b*, but I am not aware of any parallel instance in Greek art.

2d, It may be a personification of Nephele, the cloud to whom Kephalos called to shelter him from the burning sun. This Nephele the foolish Prokris in her jealousy mistook to be a nymph beloved by Kephalos. The presence of Nephele personified would be most natural; but here again we lack a sufficient parallel in Greek art.

and plumes; we have no Aphrodite Epitymbia, goddess of love and death; but the Greeks figured her on their funeral vases. Our funeral vaults are not circled round with friezes of musicians and choral dancers, with Satyrs and Bacchants; but we learn from the funeral monuments that remain that these were to the Greeks seemly decorations for a tomb.[1] If we carve a marble mourner, she droops in cheerless destitution; but to the Greek Siren, as she discharged her sacred office, it was not forbidden to clash the cymbals, beat the tympanon, and wave the thyrsos. The Greek mind, in its early freshness at least, was little troubled by the dualism of this world and the next. Greek youths and maidens made no promise to renounce the wreath and wine cup, the mirror and bead necklace, and so they bear them to the grave—to the end a glory and a grace. No doubt this close connection of Bacchus and Aphrodite with the dreadful gods of Hades had a deep mystic significance, of which much is lost to us, only the lighter aspect remaining. We must not condemn as frivolity the outcome of a sacred joy, a glad religious confidence,—must not turn away offended when we see the Siren standing as chief mourner by the tomb.

Indeed he would be a harsh critic who could condemn a figure so gentle as the Siren mourner figured in the frontispiece. The design is from a small terra-cotta now in the British Museum, about four inches in height, found with

[1] The early Christians did not at once renounce their heritage of classic grace and beauty. A sarcophagus from a Cœmeterium, sacred to St. Agnes, is adorned with a frieze representing Bacchus attended by Amores and genii of the seasons. The centre figure has been thought to be Venus Libitina. The inscription proves that the tomb is Christian; it runs:—"Aur. Agapetilla ancilla dei quae dormit in pace," etc.

a

b

c

a funeral vase at Athens.[1] Figures of mourning Sirens occur more frequently in and about the tombs of Attica than elsewhere. This terra cotta has been gilt, and bears traces of painting. The figure is winged and has a bird's tail, so gracefully contrived, however, that it seems only a sort of tectonic support to the kneeling human form. The bird-wings are long and graceful; the Siren has something of the aspect of a sorrowing angel. With her left hand she tears her hair, and with her right she beats her very fully modelled breast. The left foot is broken away, but the right ankle ends in a delicate bird's claw. The whole figure is finely executed, full of tenderness and charm; perhaps it is in part specially attractive because of the skill and tact with which the bird element is preserved, yet subordinated.

We have seen that Dionysiac subjects were considered suitable for funeral representation; we will therefore take in close connection with her lamentation office the directly and emphatically Dionysiac aspect of the Siren. Of this Dionysiac aspect art has left us abundant illustration. In Plate 41*b* we have a design from a gem in the Townley collection. The Siren form is still that of a bird-woman, but the human element is more emphasised than in Plate 37, less than in the terra cotta. She holds in her right hand a flaming torch, over her shoulder she supports with her left an amphora. She seems about to execute a sort of Dionysiac dance. The exact motive of the design is hard to determine; but its general Dionysiac intent is, I think, clear. We know that at Neapolis a torch

[1] For the drawing of this beautiful terra cotta which forms my frontispiece, I am indebted to Mrs. Bellot.

race was run in honour of the Siren Parthenope, and some have seen in the jar on the Siren's shoulder the prize amphora, and in the gesture of the figure an indication of the contest; but I believe the interpretation to be too special, as the gem is not known to be from Neapolis. Others think that the jar is a cinerary urn, and the torch for kindling the pyre; this is possible, but I believe the true view accepts a mixed funereal and Dionysiac intent. More clearly Dionysiac and less funereal is the design in Plate 41*a*, from the neck of a lekythos formerly in the Hamilton collection. The main decoration of the vase consisted in a representation of the rape of a maiden by a gigantic eagle; the Siren is merely an accessory figure. She is clumsily drawn, with the full heavy bird-body not unfrequently found. In her right hand she holds a tæmia, in her left a tympanon. In comparing the musical instruments of the Sirens and the Muses, we note that the tympanon and cymbal are peculiar to the Sirens; they probably denote a certain wild, ungoverned, though still sacred revelry; other instruments, lyre, flute, syrinx, they share in common with the more ordered Muses. The Siren in our present picture is further adorned with necklace and head-dress. It would be rash to establish any positive connection between this Siren figure on the neck of the vase and the main subject, *i.e.*, the abduction of the maiden; but it is noticeable that we do find Sirens present, as we shall again see, as the fit witnesses of scenes of love and revelry.

Most surely Dionysiac of all is the Siren we figure in Plate 41*c*, from a small Apulian lekythos in the British Museum. The design is red and black, with accessories of white. The Siren stands full face, and the face is so ugly

Pl. 42.

that we are sorry it is full; but, clumsy though she is, this hideous bird-maiden has a special charm for the archæologist, for in her right hand she waves the one attribute about whose Dionysiac significance there can be no doubtful opinion, the thyrsos. Of merely Aphroditic or funereal meaning might be tympanon, cymbal, torch, beaker, wine-jar, crown, flower, branch, ribbon, censer, basket, mirror, or bead necklace; but to the wine god, and him only, belongs, to the best of my knowledge, this sacred token of the hollow narthex. In her left hand our Dionysiac Siren fitly holds a phiale, and above her is figured a bunch of grapes; she wears a necklace, pendants, and armlets.

With this picture in our mind let us turn to Plate 42, from the obverse of an Apulian phiale in the British Museum. The design is in dull red on black, accessories in crimson. Quite apart from the Sirens here depicted, the scene is one of special interest, a Bacchic thiasos. In the centre is the great god Dionysos himself, always a welcome figure in art as well as literature. Dionysos moves to the right; his hair is ivy-crowned, and falls in long tresses; his beard is pointed; he wears a long chiton with sleeves, over which is draped a peplos. In his right hand he holds his wine-horn (*κέρας*), in his left a vine. Dionysos is followed by a Satyr, who stretches out his right hand, and in his left brandishes a thyrsos. To the left of Dionysos is a second Satyr, holding in his right hand a wine-horn, and bearing, swung over his left shoulder, an askos full of wine. The Satyrs also have their hair ivy-crowned, and it falls behind in long tresses. The scene is bounded on either side by a Siren playing on the double flute, her hair bound with a sphendone and ivy sprays.

We know from countless monuments of art and literature that poets and painters alike delighted to group around the wine-god figures and personalities the quaintest and most various, Nymphs, Satyrs, Silens, Pans, Kentaurs, and every diverse personification of nature-powers, of Love and Licence, Song and Revelry; the more hybrid and monstrous the shape, the more fitting as the comrade of a deity so fantastic. We need not wonder then to find a Siren goddess of death, and, by antithesis, of life and love and music, joining the motley revel; but we cannot distinctly affirm that in the present vase she is so figured; rather she is a passive spectator, interested but inert; she calmly plays her double flute (not her lyre, for the music had need be riotous), while the komos passes by. Corner figures such as these have no *necessary* connection, specially in late art, where considerations of form rather than meaning prevailed; but in the period to which our vase-painting belongs—that of early fine art—a certain appropriateness may, I think, be assumed without hazard; specially in the present instance, where, by other examples, the Dionysiac significance of the Siren has been securely established, and in this particular instance she actually wears the Dionysiac ivy in her hair. Turning to the reverse of the same vase, Plate 43, we meet the Sirens again fulfilling functions, this time discreditable as well as orgiastic. The Dionysiac ivy still appropriately binds their hair (the drawing of the head of the one to the left is indistinct, and her double flute is lost), and they watch as interested spectators the attempted rape of a Mænad by a lawless Satyr. The Mænad figure is very finely conceived, With her right hand she thrusts off the Satyr; with her left she swings her thyrsos, perhaps about to deal a defensive

Pl. 43.

Pl. 44.

blow. She wears no ivy in her hair, and its ordered arrangement contrasts suggestively with the wild aspect of the aggressor. He also bears over his left shoulder a thyrsos, and a grape basket seems to have been suspended from his elbow. The drawing is very fine and spirited, though with traces still remaining of archaic stiffness.

With the good fame of our Sirens at heart, we are glad to leave this spectacle of unseemly rout, and view the goddesses fulfilling a function more orderly, such as links them the closer to the muses, yet nowise dissevers them from Dionysos, the function of Inspiration. Never, perhaps, so keenly as in the conception of the Sirens are we made to feel how fluctuating, how almost antithetic, are the elements which go to form a Greek myth: the sinister dæmon of one moment is the gracious goddess of the next, the boundary between good and evil is a soft shadow land to a people whose moral standard was in the main æsthetic.

As Muses of Inspiration our Sirens have no doubt in part already figured on the tombs of rhetoricians and poets, and women famous for their grace and beauty; but in some cases all funereal import seems distinctly absent. If we turn to Plate 44 we find no trace of lamentation. The design is from an amphora, now at the Hermitage. Between two palm-trees stands a beardless man looking towards the right; he plays on a lyre with six strings; his dress is a long white chiton, with a himation coloured partly brown; on his head is a wreath; the lyre and wreath, the beardless face, mark him almost without doubt as Apollo. Near him stands a bearded man with pointed cap, wearing a short brown chlamys, probably Hermes. Facing them stands a bird with woman-face, a Siren; they seem to gaze at her with admiration.

In cases like this the conception of the Siren (as apart from her form) seems scarcely distinguishable from that of the Muse unless by a special charm; we find in literature the two terms Siren and Muse become almost interchangeable; "the Muse, the clear-voiced Siren, has spoken,"[1] says a poet; "Cato the Grammarian, the Latin Siren," says Suetonius; and Plato raises his Sirens, now eight in number, to cosmic functions that the Muses might have envied;[2] and in the mouth of the Delphic priestess Homer himself becomes "a deathless Siren."[3]

Before we leave the Sirens in their bird-woman form, we have to see them as actors in another myth widely different from the Odyssey story, and, in the form in which it has reached us, far less lovely. Late tradition, associating closely the Muses and the Sirens, told a tale of rivalry between them. A contest is held in singing and in playing on the lyre and the flute; the Sirens are vanquished;

[1] "ἀ Μῶσα κέκλην', ἀ λίγεια Σειρήν." Λιγεια is actually the name of one of the Sirens.—ALKMAN, p. 7.

Again—

"Πίνδαρε, Μουσάων ἱερὸν στόμα, καὶ λάλε Σειρὴν,
Βακχυλίδη, Σαπφοῦς τ' Αἰολίδες χάριτες."—*Anth. Pal.* ix. 184.

Again, the Siren seems entirely a creature of grace and inspiration in the following:—

"ἐσθλόν ἑταῖρον Ἔρωτος ὁρᾷς Σειρῆνα θεάτρων
κλωσὶ Μέναν̣δρον ἀεὶ κρᾶτα πυκαζόμενον."—*Anth. Pal.* vii. 710.

[2] "ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν κύκλων αὐτοῦ ἄνωθεν ἐφ' ἑκάστου βεβηκέναι Σειρῆνα συμπεριφερομένην, φωνὴν μίαν ἱεῖσαν, ἕνα τόνον· ἐκ πασῶν δὲ ὀκτὼ οὐσῶν μίαν ἁρμονίαν ξυμφωνεῖν."—PLATO, *Rep.* x. 617, B.

He makes them eight in number, probably because the number nine was sacred to the Muses. Eight Sirens occur (but probably the coincidence of number is accidental) on a lamp at Cortona.

[3] See the answer given by the priestess to the Emperor Hadrian when he asked of the race and birthplace of the poet—

"ἄγνωστον μ' ἐρέεις γενεῆς καὶ πατρίδος αἴης
ἀμβροσίου Σειρῆνος."—*Anthol. Pal.* xiv. 102.

the victor Muses fall upon the conquered, pluck their feathers, and wear them hereafter in token of victory.[1] The story is a late one; early art knows nothing of it, nor would it have lent itself fitly to the severity of archaic design. Our art monuments of this form of the myth are feeble, though not wanting in a sort of degenerate grace.

On a sarcophagus relief in the gallery of the Uffizi at Florence the story is depicted in full (see Plate 45), both the contest and the subsequent defeat and punishment. To the left Zeus is seated as arbiter; near him Athene, eager for the victory of her muses; and Hera, at whose instigation (we learn from Pausanias[2]) the Sirens dared the combat. She seems to entreat for them, but in vain. A few of the Muses only can be identified by their regular attributes. Urania has her globe, Melpomene the mask at her feet—these two seem to be spectators merely; Thalia, identified by her pedum, is busy with the punishment of her foes.

We regret that a story which to us in modern days is so full of meaning and pathos, should have been depicted by the ancients in a form so clumsy. Near akin are such tales as the rivalry between the flute-player Marsyas and the lyre-god Apollo, between the Pierides and the Muses. In each and all we have the natural antagonism, the attempted revolt, of the new order against the old, of wild sensation against tempered emotion, the clamour of earth's pas-

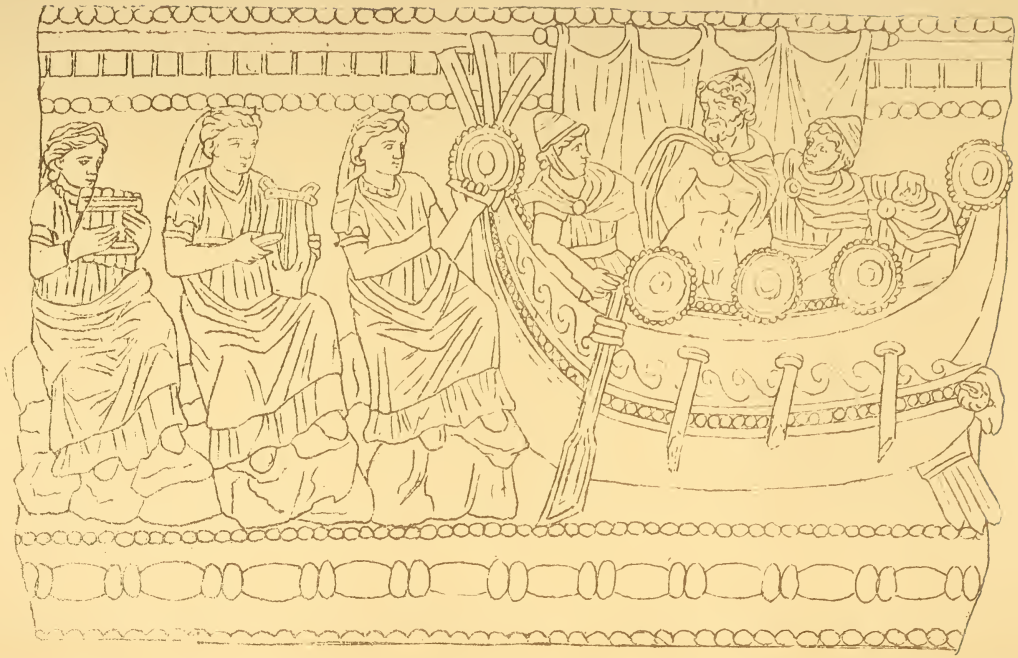
[1] "τὶ γὰρ δεῖ τὰς Σειρῆνας λέγειν, ὧν ἔτι τὸ πτερὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου φέρουσιν αἱ νηκήσασαι."—JULIAN, *Epist.* 41.

[2] Paus. ix. xxxiv. 3:—

"Τὰς γὰρ δὴ Ἀχελῴου θυγατέρας ἀναπεισθείσας φασὶν ὑπὸ Ἥρας καταστῆναι πρὸς τὰς Μούσας ἐς ὠδῆς ἔριν· αἱ δέ, ὡς ἐνίκησαν, ἀποτίλασαι τῶν Σειρήνων τὰ πτερὰ ποιήσασθαι στεφάνους ἀπ' αὐτῶν λέγονται." Possibly the myth originated in the name of the scene of action, Aptera in Crete.

sions and the lower-world discords raised in vain against the harmonies of high Olympus.

Hitherto the bird-woman form has been adhered to in art, but it was not always to prevail. Anthropomorphism was at work here as in other myths; a devout symbolism was supplanted by a conscious seeking after beauty of form; a wide-spread euphemism forbade that even a partly malignant dæmon should be presented to the eye as anything but wholly fair. As transition stages we may note Plates 41*a* and 41*b*. The wings and feet are still bird-like, but the anthropomorphic tendency is fast prevailing; not only the head as heretofore, but the arms, neck, and breast are human. Thus, step by step, we are prepared for the final transformation in Plate 46. Here are the tempters of Odysseus once more, but how changed! Sirens now at last, such as we might picture them in Homer; fair maidens (though of Etruscan fashion) clothed in flowing drapery, beguiling by their presence no less than their song. To place them full in sight is certainly to draw aside the veil of mystery which Homer cast about them; but we feel, if they must take shape, this is to our modern minds the fitter form. The design is from a relief on an Etruscan sarcophagus from Volterræ; the style is late and clumsy. The three maidens play three different instruments—the syrinx, the lyre, the double flute. It was not till the period of decline that it became customary to represent women playing any instrument; they sang unaccompanied, or if accompanied, by a man; the Muses sing, Apollo leads them with his lyre. The boat of Odysseus is richly ornamented after the fashion of a Roman galley. Odysseus and his companions all wear the pointed sailor's cap, the con-



ventional attribute of Odysseus in late art. The attitudes of the heroes are dramatic, even sensational, and the whole presentation contrasts strangely with the quaint austerity of the earlier vase in Plate 37.

The passing of Odysseus by the Sirens was a very favourite subject with the Etruscans; no less than eight sarcophagi remain on which this design is figured. A very similar one to that we have figured may be studied in the Etruscan Room of the British Museum; the sarcophagus is surmounted as usual by a heavy recumbent figure executed in the clumsy Etruscan style.

As beautiful maidens the ancient world left its Sirens. As art grew less stern, less severely moral, the desire for ethical significance, for religious symbolism, gave way to the demand for mere æsthetic satisfaction. But in later days the moral sense awoke again, and would not have these muses of seduction wholly fair; their song ended in death, and so to the beautiful maiden was fitly given the tail of an evil sea monster; and thus we find the Siren transformed into the modern mermaid. Brought at first perhaps by Phœnician mariners from the East, the land of wonder and mystery, they took fresh shape, fresh meaning, in the later mythology of the Greeks and Romans, and live as Loreleys and Undines in Teutonic waters. Thither for a while we must follow them.

By some it is maintained that the Siren of the middle ages is a mere copy of the ancient figure, and has nothing to do with the nixies and mermaids of northern mythology. Probably the myth was common Aryan property, and had its separate growth and development in the several branches

of the race. In later days, when the mythology of Greek and Teuton met and mingled, the several conceptions separately formed would be liable to confusion. In one respect there is a curious analogy between classic and mediæval times,—that is, in the fluctuations which the conception of the Siren undergoes both in literature and art. On the whole we should incline to think that the fish form is characteristic of mediæval times. This statement might be made more positively but for the existence of one monument of doubtful antiquity. A terra cotta lamp (Plate 47*a*), preserved at Canterbury, is decorated with a design—Odysseus in his boat passing a single Siren.[1] The work is very feeble and clumsy; it must have been executed at a time when art had sunk very low; its only claim to reproduction is the fact that in it alone of all works with any claim to antiquity the Siren has a fish's tail. The general baldness and flatness of the design is somewhat relieved by the naïve attitude of one of the comrades. Unmindful of the traditional wax, or deeming it unfit for presentation, the artist makes the seafarer stop his ears with his fingers. Odysseus himself wears a simple long flowing garment, no pointed cap.

Though on the whole the fish form was most popular, the bird-woman form was not wholly deserted in mediæval times. The learned Abbess of St. Odilie, Herrad of Landsperg, tells the story of Odysseus and the Sirens in her *Hortus Deliciarum*;[2] and in the quaint illustrations with which her work is profusely decorated she adheres to the

[1] The Siren myth was a favourite one for representation on lamps, doubtless from its prophylactic association.

[2] The original MS. perished in the fire at the Strasburg Library, and I have only had access to the commentary of Engelhardt, to which selected illustrations are appended.

a

b

Pl. 47.

conventional bird-woman form, *i.e.* in its later shape. She is faithful also to the Homeric dual number. She gives three pictures. In the first, two Sirens, women with bird feet and wings, stand playing, one the flute, the other the lyre; the passing sailors are unmanned and powerless through the sweetness of their song; in the second, they spring on board and slay the sailors; in the third, they in turn are overcome by the guile of Odysseus, and perish. Plate 48 gives part of the first scene. One scarcely need add that the abbess makes allegorical use of her Sirens; they figure among the dangers through which Christ leads his betrothed, the Church, to the vintry of Bliss. Herrad died in A.D. 1195; the *Hortus Deliciarum* probably dates from about A.D. 1160. The grim austerity of these mediæval tempters brings to our mind the strange awful outline of Dante's Siren:—

"It was the hour when the diurnal heat,
No more can warm the coldness of the moon,
Vanquished by earth or peradventure Saturn.

. . . . . .

There came to me in dreams a stammering woman,
Squint in her eyes, and in her feet distorted,
With hands dissevered and of sallow hue.

I looked at her; and as the sun restores
The frigid members which the night benumbs,
Even thus my gaze did render voluble

Her tongue, and made her all erect thereafter;
In little while, and the lost countenance,
As love desires it, so in it did colour.

When in this wise she had her speech unloosed,
She 'gan to sing, so that with difficulty
Could I have turned my thoughts away from her.

'I am,' she sang, 'I am the Siren sweet,
Who mariners amid the main unman,
So full am I of pleasantness to hear.'" [1]

LONGFELLOW.

She is put to flight by a lady, "saintly and alert," and all her hidden vileness is exposed. The lady is Reason; the Siren has fallen in mediæval days to a mere image of sense temptation; she no longer allures men by the bait of knowledge; or shall we rather say the men of later times had sunk, and only sense—knowledge no longer—could entice them?

Dante's vision needs no picture: it is alone too terribly distinct, and we turn with a sense of pleasant relief to gentler Sirens, and a lighter tale concerning them. Our five Sirens in Plate 49 dwell in the tower which stands to the right as you enter the old Bishop's Palace at Beauvois. The design is executed in distemper, and is full of freedom and quaint grace. The figures are relieved by a ground tint of deep red, enriched with powderings of sombre foliage work; the date of their execution is about A.D. 1306.

Some such design may have met the eyes of Gower when he wrote—

"Sirenes of a wonder kind,
Ben monstres as the bokes tellen,
And in the grete see they dwellen;

[1] "Nell ora, che non può 'l calor diurno,
Intiepidar piu 'l freddo della Luna,
Vinto da Terra o talor da Saturno.
Me venne in sogno una femmina balba,
Con gli occhi guerci, e sovra i piè distorta
Con le man monche e di colore scialba."

i pie distorta is strangely in accordance with the claw feet of the bird-woman, though there is no other trace of any such conception in Dante's description.

Pl. 48.

Of body both and of visage,
Like unto women of yonge age,
Up fro' the navel on high they be,
And down benethe, as men may see,
They bene of fishes the figure."

Confessio Amantis, I.

He, too, knows of their wondrous singing, They raise

"So swete a steven
Like to the melodie of heven."

The same delusion waits upon their song; only here again the snare is sense, not as in old times, knowledge:—

"in here aris
they wene it be a paradis
wch after is to hem a hell
for reson may nought with hem dwell."

Their very number—five, as it occurs on our fresco—is noted by Spencer.

"There those five sisters had continuall trade,
And used to bathe themselves in that deceitfull shade.
. . . . . .
"They were faire Ladies till they fondly strived
With th' Heliconian maids for maystery,
Of whom they, overcomen, were deprived
Of their proud beautie, and th' one moyity
Transformed to fish for their bold surquedry." [1]

Sometimes the blood of the Siren (as in classic days her sculptured form) seems to have been regarded as prophylactic. In the *Orlando Innamorato* the Count slays an evil Siren who seeks his destruction, and smears with her gore his casque and corselet. He thereby renders them proof against the onslaught of a terrible fire-breathing bull, for

[1] Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Book II., Canto xii. 30.

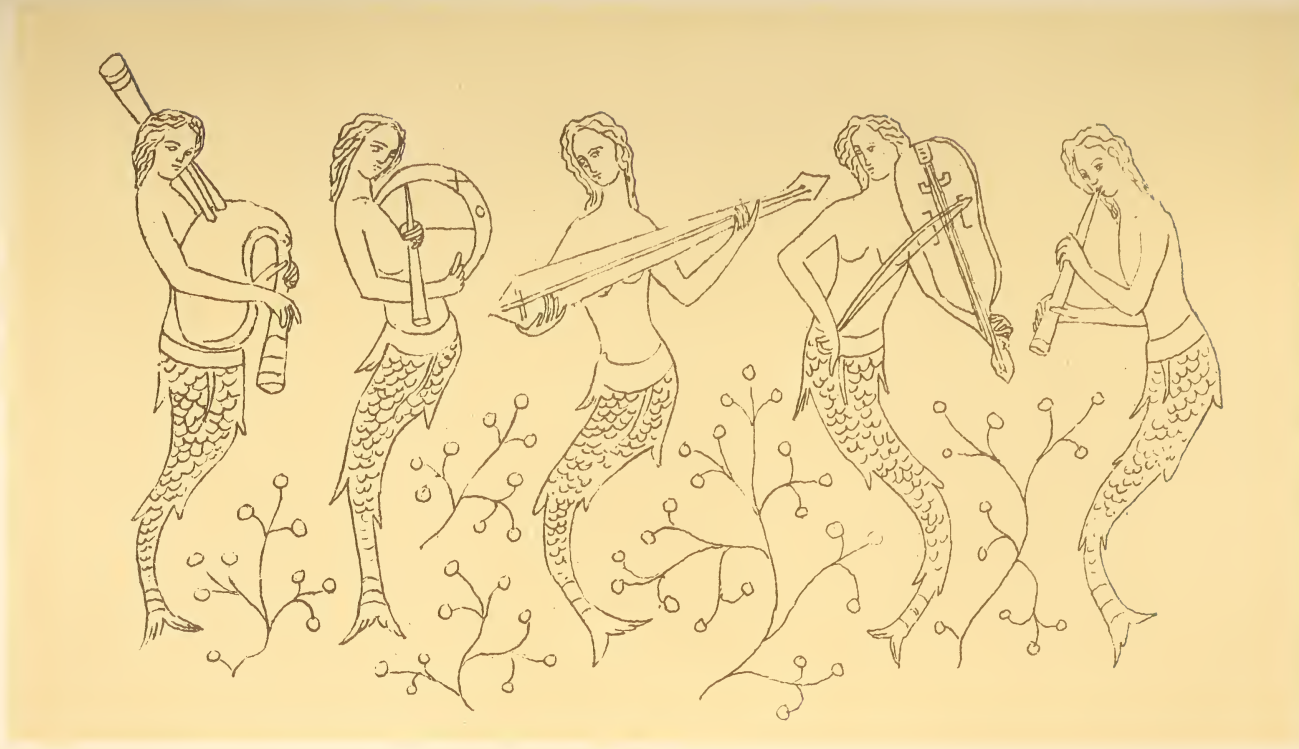
"naught resists his touch of flame and iron
Save what has drunk the life-blood of a Syren." [1]

Oddly enough, in mediæval as in classic days, we find our Siren promoted from time to time, not merely to prophylactic but to distinctly sacred functions. She seems somehow to have cast her spell over the austere monk as well as the "lively Grecian." Bishops love to have her to adorn the Episcopal chair; parish priests welcome her to decorate their baptisteries. But there seems always a lurking misgiving as to her fitness—a misgiving surely pardonable, for once we find her seated in a cathedral choir, holding in the right hand a mirror, in the left her tail. Sometimes this misgiving rises to certainty, and she is promptly banished to the society of the blackest demons. Often she appears, as of old, holding in her hand a fish, in Christian days a sacred symbol. Then controversy rages afresh. Gentle monks, who love her for her beauty, say she is the emblem of "Heavenly Grace," saving the soul by immersion in the Waters of Baptism.[2] Sterner moralists will have none of this: she is the devil, catching the sinner amid the waves of temptation. The design figured in Plate 47*b* embodies a different legend. It is from a Latin bestiary. The story, contrary to classic tradition, runs that when the weather was stormy the mermaid or Siren rose to sing, the sailor was lulled to sleep, and perished in the tempest. This is strangely at variance with the "dead calm" of the Homeric myth.

We have passed in review, roughly in chronological

[1] "Arde e consume cio che tocca appena
Sol si difende il sangue di Sirena."
Translated by Miss E. M. Clarke.

[2] Tertullian, speaking of souls purified by baptism, calls them "pisciculi."



Pl. 49.

order, the principal records, literary and artistic, left us of the Sirens. We have now to consider the etymology of their name, their parentage and its significance, and briefly the chief *locales* of their worship, before we approach finally the question of the origin of their bird form in art, and, a question closely akin, their funeral significance.

As regards their name, unhappily there are two Indo-European roots, SVAR, identical in form, widely different in signification. SVAR, to burn and shine (yielding in Greek *σϜερ*, and with suffix, *yo σϜεργος*, Σειρός, Σείριος, the burning dog-star, yielding also *σϜελας*, *σελας*, *σϜερα* Ἥρα). Schrader attributes Siren to this root, and hence proceeds to turn these sea-muses into a sort of female dog-star, a personification of oppressive earth-born stifling heat. For confirmation of this view he relies mainly on the chthonic origin later attributed to the Sirens, and on the mention in the Odyssey of the fierce heat of the sun and the dead calm of the sea. From this dreary view of our old-world mermaids we are saved by the second root, SVAR, to sound (SVARYANS, *σϜεργενς*, *σειρην*; cognate forms are *σϜαριγξ*, *συριγξ*, *σϜαλπιγξ*, *σαλπιγξ*; *σειληνοι*, the inventors of the flute).[1] According to this view the Sirens will be simply the singers or those who make music, and through every phase and development of the myth this characteristic is clearly present. It is possible that the root SVAR may not be of Indo-European origin at all; the name with the myth may have been brought from the East by the great carriers of the ancient world. There is a Semitic root (שרך), meaning "sing." Their name, then, be it of Indo-European or of Semitic origin, links them with

[1] See Vaniçek, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch ad verb.*

music, and through music with the Muses. The parentage assigned them speaks yet more clearly. An Ætolian myth makes them spring from the broken horn of Achelous, the river-god. A more current form of the myth makes them the daughters of the muse Terpsichore, by Achelous. Sophokles calls them daughters of Phorkys. Euripides makes his Helen implore them as daughters of Chthon to come at the bidding of Persephone and join her funeral wail.

As regards the *locale* of their worship, its chief seat was in the south-west coast of Italy, washed by a sea which was to the early Greek mariner full of wonder and mysterious peril. Neapolis borrowed its name of Parthenope from one of the Sirens (in post-Homeric times three in number), Parthenope, who was fabled to have been buried there, and a torch race was run in her honour.

These western haunts of the Sirens are familiar to us all.

> "By the songs of Sirens sweet,
> By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
> And fair Ligeia's golden comb,
> Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
> Sleeking her soft alluring locks."

Near the island of Capreæ were three small rocky points known as Sirenes. At Terina the Siren Ligeia was worshipped, and it may be her image that was stamped on the beautiful coinage of the place. The father of the Sirens, Achelous, was widely worshipped in lower Italy. We gather, then, thus far, that they were akin to the Muses, and dwelt in the western sea. Where other localities are mentioned, some obvious reason is usually evident. Aptera, in Crete, the scene of the later battle between the Muses and the Sirens, is due to a mistaken etymology. Ætolia'

mentioned by Lucian, is due to the connection with Acheloüs. Thessaly is suggested by their Muse aspect. Pliny mentions India, possibly because India was in his days the favourite seat of the marvellous.

Let us pass briefly in review the materials, literary and artistic, we have collected. As regards the Siren *form*, we began with the sinister bird-woman, and, through gradual stages of anthropomorphism, we passed to the purely human shape stamped by no outward impress of evil; thence again, by a mediæval reaction, to the modern fish-maiden. As regards *functions*, we have seen the Sirens figure as muses of seduction, as tempters of Odysseus, as muses of death and lamentation, as muses of inspiration, lastly as conquered rivals of the sacred Nine. We have noted that, by functions, parentage, or attributes, they connect themselves in turn with chthonic deities, with sea and river gods, with Athene, with Hera, most of all with Dionysos. The chief *locale* of their worship we have found to be the western sea. None of these details, as we shall see, are wanting in significance; but it is the gradual euphemism in their treatment observable in literature, most striking in art, which is, I think, specially suggestive—the euphemism of the Greek of later days in contrast to his early religious simplicity; for to this euphemism we owe the later human Siren-form, which by antithesis makes the early bird-woman seem to us unnatural and monstrous.

Beginning with our first art monument, Plate 37, let us suppose an artist, say of the sixth, or early in the fifth century B.C., wishful to depict on his vase the story of Odysseus and the Sirens. "Why," perhaps we ask, "should he choose this

particular myth for representation?" The work is a sacred, a very solemn one; we feel sure the subject was chosen with an earnest purpose. The vase may perhaps be buried hereafter with its dead owner, to his honour and to the glory of the gods. The artist's mind is full, it may be, of the mystic doctrines of some Orphic sect, teachings about trial and purification, of death and some sort of shadowy after-life; to him nothing is more suitable, more significant, than this picture of the trial and victory of this human agonist by the might of the gods, this sailor through the sea of death, for as such this western sea was in early days regarded. The artist then read or listened to his Homer, but read it, so to speak, by the light of patristic interpretation. No shadow of allegory, I believe, clouded the clear fancy of Homer; but as soon as we look at our funeral vase we feel instinctively that the mists are closing around; there is an air of constraint, of mystery, of religious rather than moral significance. Odysseus means more than himself, the peril of the Sirens is not past. Nothing in Homer at all gives utterance to our feeling; the words of later days and sadder poets [1] are present rather to our minds. We remember that for centuries the sea voyage has been the symbol of the troublesome waves of this world and the transit to the next,[2]—that on graves is found the inscription εὐπλοῖ. But, we may naturally ask, Who taught to the happy Greek this gloomy symbolism? If

[1] See *Anthol. Palat.* x. 65.

[2] If any one desires to see the moral of the Siren story drawn out in full by the allegoriser of later days, Theophylactus will satisfy him.

Sokrates writes to Alkibiades:—

"καὶ τὰ τῆς ποιήσεως παίγνια πάσης ἔμπλεα σοφίας καθέστηκε. . . . μυθολογεῖται τὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀπόρρητα· Σειρῆνας γὰρ δοκῶ τὰς ἀσχήμονας ἡδονὰς τὴν ποίησιν ἀναπλάττεσθαι . . . διὸ κηρῷ τὴν μὲν ἀπειρίαν, δεσμῷ δὲ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐδήλωσεν," etc.—THEOPH. *Epist.*, 82.

Homer and Hesiod know nothing of it, whence did it come? We cannot too much bear in mind, in reflecting on the spirit of Greek art, that in the seventh century B.C. there was opened to the Greeks that great treasure-house of wonder and mystery and strange religious symbolism, Semitic Egypt. By the sixth century Egyptian superstitions had spread far and wide over Hellas; conjectures were rife as to the future existence and its mode of approach; and the transit of the soul along the sacred river in the Nile-boat would be familiar to all. The Greek, always ready to assimilate fresh thoughts, would adopt much of this foreign lore, and see in his own mythology a new significance.

If some such allegorising process was going on in his *mind*, we may conjecture with even more confidence what recognised forms of presentation hovered before his *eye*. We are supposing that he wished to depict the Siren as an evil tempter, watching for the seafarer as he voyaged through the perilous waters of life and death. Even had he wished to be strictly faithful to Homer, what indications of form does Homer give? None. Now, an artist of these early days desired above all things not to please, but to edify; he worked not to minister to sensuous enjoyment, but for the glory of the gods; his religious purpose was at once clear and unshrinking. If he had a moral to enforce, as we suppose in this case he had, his object would be, not so much that the design should be pleasing as that the symbolism should be forcible. Assyrian artists, who, through the medium of the Phœnicians, did so much to stimulate and mould Greek tastes, were lavish in strange hybrid forms. On countless vases we find figures of curious monsters, among them human-headed birds. For his gods the Greek, with his exaltation of human form, would allow

no such abasement; but for a being of sinister intent, an incarnation of mysterious danger, what more suitable? I do not say that the Siren bird-woman form was borrowed from Assyrian decorations; but it does seem as if designs of this monstrous character, borrowed from foreign nations, and alien on the whole to his own genius, helped to familiarise the Greek mind with hybrid forms, and made their adoption possible. Once more, these Sirens were *unseen* singers crouching to wait *unseen* for the ruin of the mariner. Familiar to the eye of the artist would probably be the Egyptian picture of the soul itself; the *unseen* thing figured as a bird, human-faced;[1] the type was common on monuments; one instance is figured in Plate 50*b*—the vignette to chapter eighty-nine of the "Book of the Dead," the chapter of the Reunion of the Soul with the Body in Chermeter (*i.e* the Egyptian Hades). The soul flies towards the body, which lies on the funeral couch, and bears to it the symbol of life. Perhaps also familiar to the eye of the artist were the forms of the gentle death genii (Harpies, as we call them, probably by confusion with a stronger, fiercer type),—those genii who so tenderly bear away the souls of mortals after death. One, from the so-called "Harpy tomb" in the British Museum, is figured in Plate 50*a*. The gentle smile may be but the quaint fixity of the archaic mouth, but we can scarcely attach any sinister interpretation to forms so peaceful.

[1] The bird form of the soul is found in Keltic mythology. Mailduin (the Irish Odysseus) comes to an island with trees on it in clusters, on which were perched many birds. The aged man of the island, who is clothed all over with long white hair, and wears no other dress, tells him, "These are the souls of my children, and of all my descendants, both men and women, who are sent to this little island to abide with me according as they die in Erin."

a

b

If, then, our artist was, as we suppose, tinged with the influence of mystic Egyptian speculation, this bird-woman form, this symbol of the unseen demonic power, would seem a fitting incarnation of an evil influence, unseen yet personal. He would certainly, in those early, earnest days, desire to emphasise the *evil* aspect of the Sirens; he might also wish to indicate, in a way suggestive to the quick Greek instinct, the fact that they were *unseen*. To any one accustomed to read the curious symbolism of Greek art, this indication will not seem far-fetched. Once this bird-form adopted, with its spiritual Egyptian associations, and it would promptly react in the conception of the Siren, and render her doubly fit for mystic primeval associations, and her other attributes of song and loveliness would harmonise well with the Greek Dionysiac surroundings of death. That the hybrid form should in later days, by a gradual anthropomorphism, become purely human, is intelligible enough. Later Greek artists wrought more and more to please the senses, less and less to glorify the gods; they became more intent in producing a design æsthetically charming, less intent on securing a clear and striking symbolism; in art as in literature speculation is seen to sap the old faith, and with it perishes the simple, earnest purpose.

In considering their form in art we have well-nigh solved the question of their essence. We cannot find in them with one author merely an incarnation of the smiling sea, nor with another an embodiment of chthonic heat, nor with a third see in them the song of the wind in the clouds; still less with a fourth do we think them to have been originally birds, nightingales by the sea-shore beguiling

mariners to listen. They seem to us, from the outset to the end, to have been a kind of evil Muse, not wholly evil, but very far from entirely good; sprung from a lower world of mystery and evil and death; as such fitted for sombre funeral lamentation; sculptured on tombs with a half propitiatory prophylactic intent; yet largely, because of Dionysiac association, merging by degrees this character into that of mere seductive loveliness, becoming in later days a sort of mythic hetairai; yet, because to the pure all things are pure, rising at times to loftier functions, ordering for Plato the sphere music of his Kosmos. Muses they are in their knowledge of all things,[1] in their sweet song; but Muses rather of the barren sea than of the clear spring water,—Muses who dwell below, not they who "Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσιν."

[1] Of the Muses—

"ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε, πάρεστέ τε, ἴστε τε πάντα."—*Il.* ii. 484.

Of the Sirens—

"ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάντα."—*Od.* xii. 189.

VI

THE MYTH OF SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

After Odysseus and his comrades have passed the "Sirens twain," another double peril is to come,—a sharp sudden trial, which follows with harsh antithesis after the dead calm and the sound of sweet voices singing. Of this peril also Circe warns him beforehand.

"On the other part are two rocks, whereof the one reaches with sharp peak to the wide heaven, and a dark cloud encompasses it; this never streams away, and there is no clear air about the peak, neither in summer nor in harvest-tide. No mortal man may scale it or set foot thereon, not though he had twenty hands and feet; for the rock is smooth and sheer as it were polished. And in the midst of the cliff is a dim cave turned to Erebus, towards the place of darkness, whereby ye shall even steer your hollow ship, noble Odysseus. Not with an arrow from a bow might a man in his strength reach from his hollow ship into that deep cave. And therein dwelleth Scylla, yelping terribly. Her voice is indeed no greater than the voice of a new-born whelp, but a dreadful monster is she; nor would any look on her gladly, not if it were a god that met her. Verily she hath twelve feet all dangling down, and six necks, exceeding long, and on each a hideous head, and

therein three rows of teeth set thick and close, full of black death. Up to her middle is she sunk far down in the hollow cave, but forth she holds her heads from the dreadful gulf, and there she fishes, swooping round the rock for dolphins or sea dogs, or whatso greater beast she may anywhere take, whereof the deep-voiced Amphitrite feeds countless flocks. Thereby no sailors can boast that they have fled scathless ever with their ships, for with each head she carries off a man whom she hath snatched from out the dark-prowed ship.

"But that other cliff, Odysseus, thou shalt note, lying lower, hard by the first; thou couldst send an arrow across. And thereon is a great fig-tree growing, in fullest leaf, and beneath it mighty Charybdis sucks down black water, for thrice a day she spouts it forth, and thrice a day she sucks it down in terrible wise. Never mayst thou be there when she sucks the water, for none might save thee there from thy bane, not even the Earth-shaker. But take heed, and, swiftly drawing nigh to Scylla's rock, drive the ship past, since of a truth it is far better to mourn six of thy company in the ship than all in the self-same hour. So spake she, but I answered and said unto her: Come, I pray thee herein, goddess, tell me true if there be any means whereby I might escape from the deadly Charybdis and avenge me on that other, when she would prey upon my company.

"So spake I, and that fair goddess answered me: Man overbold, lo, now again the deeds of war are in thy mind, and the travail thereof. Wilt thou not yield thee, even to the deathless gods? As for her, she is no mortal, but an immortal plague, dread, grievous, and fierce, and not to be fought with; and against her there is no defence—flight is

the bravest way. For if thou tarry to do on thine armour by the cliff, I fear lest once again she sally forth and catch at thee with so many heads, and seize as many men as before. So drive past with all thy force and call on Cratais, mother of Scylla, which bore her for a bane to mortals. And she will then let her from dashing forth thereafter."

Such is the warning of Circe; and before we pass to the actual adventure of Odysseus, we may pause to see how this fell monster was figured in art. We can fancy that some Semitic craftsman might have attempted a faithful copy of this hideous sea brute, have fashioned "six necks of great length, on each a hideous head, and within three rows of teeth;" but the Greek artist refused almost from the outset to embody conceptions so unmeasured. If even the great Homer sang of a hybrid beast too horrid for presentation, the artist refused to produce a servile copy of the poet's picture. Nothing, perhaps, is more instructive than to see how the conception of Scylla was gradually matured[1] into finished loveliness, with just a touch of malignant mystery; how incongruities which might have appalled genius less flexible are modified and recombined into a new symmetry, and the beast-form, at first the token of degradation, becomes an added splendour.

Unhappily we have no very early Scylla; we can only

[1] This fluctuation in the form of Scylla, and the want of fidelity to Homeric details, is noted by ancient writers:—

"*τεθέαμαι, οἶμαι, πολλαχοῦ Σκύλλης εἰκόνα οὐχ οἵαν Ὅμηρος διηγεῖται . . . οἱ δὲ πλάσται ἐπὶ μᾶλλον κομψεύονται ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ. ποιοῦσι γὰρ αὐτῆς τὰ μὲν ἄπ' ἄχρι κεφαλῆς ἄχρι λαγόνων παρθένον, ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς ἰξύος εὐθὺς εἰς τοὺς κύνας ἐκφερομένην, δεινούς ὄντας καὶ σμερδαλέους, καὶ τριστοιχοι μὲν αὐτοῖς οἱ ὀδόντες, ἀνεστήκασι δὲ αἱ κεφαλαί, ζητοῦσι δὲ ἰσάριθμοι θήραν.*"—THEM. *Or.* xxii. p. 279 B.

watch the later stages of the transformation, and guess how the fancy of early artists wrestled with the form of the rude beast-fish, over which at last they obtained such perfect mastery. We can well understand that in later days, when the *cultus* of form was at its height, artists must have revelled in the fantastic shapes and sinuous combinations to which a sea-beast such as Scylla very readily lent herself.

In Plate 51 is figured a design from a Hydria in the British Museum, red on black, with accessories of white. Scylla is woman-shaped to the waist; she ends in a finely curved fish's tail. Below her waist projects the head of a fish: this fish has a long snout, with teeth jutting out, and horns. Scylla herself holds in one hand an oar, in the other a cuttle-fish. We remember that it was her wont to "fish, groping round the rocks for dolphins or sea-dogs, or whatso greater beast she may anywhere take." We see at once that there is no attempt to copy the Homeric picture: if the artist remembered at all the horrid details of the poet, he at once rejects such as are unfit for his purpose. That purpose was to paint on a vase a beautiful design, with probably some mystic Dionysiac significance. The goddess is decorated with stephane and bead necklace crossed, and as we look, we are reminded irresistibly (though the two moments have no purposed connection) of the day when Scylla, the maiden, love-stricken, "non niveo retinet baccata monilia collo;" she wears her enforced adornments calmly enough now, and possibly with some funereal intent, for we shall see later on that her mission is to watch at the portals of Hades.

Somewhat similar in design, though of finer and earlier

Pl. 51.

character, is the very beautiful Scylla type which appears on the coins of Thurium. The goddess is figured on the helmet of Athene (Plate 52*a*); on the reverse is the butting bull, symbol of the river god of Thurium. The Athenians founded Thurium on the ruins of Sybaris. They may have found a local cult, with Scylla for its object, and added her with some prophylactic intent to the helmet of their protecting sea goddess. Or possibly the connection is through the Scylla of Megara, whom we shall learn to know later; she belonged to Attic cycles, as her father Nisos was son to Pandion, king of Athens.

But we must return to the hideous daughter of Cratais, and see how Odysseus fared at her hands.

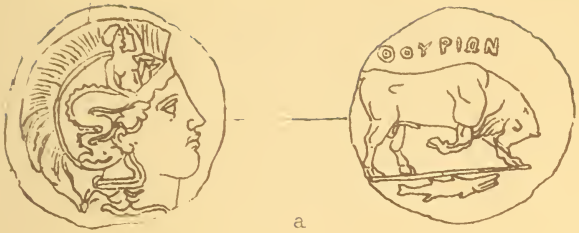
"But as soon as we left that isle (Sirens'), thereafter presently I saw smoke and a great wave, and heard the sea roaring. Then, for very fear, the oars fell from their hands, and rang all as they went down the stream; and the ship was holden there, for my company no longer plied the long oars with their hands. But I paced the ship, and cheered on my company as I stood by each one and spake smooth words:

"Friends, forasmuch as in sorrow we are not all unlearned, truly this is no greater woe that is upon us than when the Cyclops penned us by main might in his hollow cave; yet even thence we made escape by my manfulness, even by my counsel and my wit, and some day I think this adventure too we shall remember. Come now, therefore, let us all give ear to do according to my word. Do ye smite the deep surf of the sea with your blades, as ye sit on the benches, if peradventure Zeus may grant us to escape from and shun this death. And as for thee, helmsman, thus

I charge thee, and ponder it in thine heart, seeing that thou wieldest the helm of the hollow ship. Keep the ship well away from this smoke and from the wave, and hug the rocks, lest the ship, when thou heedest not, start from her course to the other side, and so thou run us upon trouble.

"So I spake, and quickly they hearkened to my words. But of Scylla I told them nothing more,—a bane none might deal with, lest haply my company should cease from rowing for fear, and hide them in the hold. In that same hour I suffered myself to forget the hard behest of Circe, in that she bade me in no wise be armed; but I did on my glorious harness, and caught up two long lances in my hands, and went on to the decking of the prow, for thence, methought that Scylla of the rock would first be seen who was to bring woe on my company. Yet could I not spy her anywhere, and my eyes failed for gazing all about toward the darkness of the rock.

"Next we began to sail up the narrow strait lamenting. For on the one hand lay Scylla, and on the other mighty Charybdis in terrible wise sucked down the salt sea-water. Often as she discharged it, like a cauldron on a great fire, she would seethe up through all her troubled deeps, and, overhead, the spray fell on the tops of either cliff. But oft as she gulped down the salt sea-water, within she was all plain to see through her troubled deeps; and the rock around roared horribly, and beneath the earth was manifest, swart with sand; and pale fear gat hold on my men. Towards her, then, we looked, fearing destruction; but Scylla, meanwhile, caught from out my hollow ship six of my company, the hardiest of their hands and the chief in might. And looking into the swift ship to find my men, even then I



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marked their feet and hands as they were lifted on high; and they cried aloud in their agony, and called me by my name for that last time of all. Even as when a fisher on some headland lets down with a long rod his baits for a snare to the little fishes below, casting into the deep the horn of an ox of the homestead, and, as he catches each, flings it struggling ashore, so struggling were they borne upward to the cliff. And there she devoured them, shrieking, in her gates, they stretching forth their hands to me in the dread death struggle. And the most pitiful thing was this that mine eyes have seen of all my travail that I endured in searching out the paths of the sea."

This scene of tumult and agony is seldom presented in full by the artist. Painting, in the modern sense, with all the adjuncts of chiaroscuro, might have adventured the cloud-encompassed peak, the seething cauldron, and the pigmy ship; but for plastic treatment the scene is too shadowy, too little statuesque; it involves too much that is realistic and accidental. Hence our art monuments treat, for the most part, detached situations,—Scylla dealing death to one or more of the comrades; and such representations as these occur more frequently in late times, when sensational art could even adventure to dramatise the death agonies of Laokoon.

Three designs of this character we must consider together, because the analogy of their treatment is so close as to suggest something more than mere accidental similarity. We begin with the design figured in Plate 53*c*, from a Pompeian wall-painting. Scylla is here depicted as a terrible raging woman, yet with a sort of wild sensational beauty about her. Her body ends in a double fish's tail,

from under which her dogs emerge. She is in the act of brandishing a rudder, about to hurl it at the youths whom three of her dogs have caught hold of, and are tearing to pieces. These dogs are not of strictly dog form; there is something of the sea-horse about them; they may have been intended as a sort of indication of the cruel sea waves. The painting is architectural in character—intended for a cornice. It is executed in yellow monochrome on a white ground.

Turning to Plate 53*a*, a design from a gem, we are at once struck by the similarity of treatment. The execution of the gem is, I think, far finer; the whole action and expression of Scylla is more vigorous, yet less sensational. Still formally the conception is the same; we have the same proportion observed between the human and fish parts; the same motive, Scylla brandishing a rudder against the ship-wrecked mariner. On one side in the gem a human figure and a sea-dog are absent, but this is probably due to the rounded limits of the stone as opposed to the square of the picture.

Turning to Plate 53*b*, the design from the obverse of a coin of Sextus Pompeius, the same picture again meets us, only with yet further limitations. Scylla still brandishes her rudder, but the victims are gone: the general pose and composition of the monster figure is the same as before.

Looking closely at these three analogous designs, what is the conviction that grows upon us? Perhaps our first thought is, Surely the engravers of the gem and the coin die saw the great picture at Pompeii, and borrowed for their lesser works a conception from the famous original. This might seem plausible for a moment; the picture to us is

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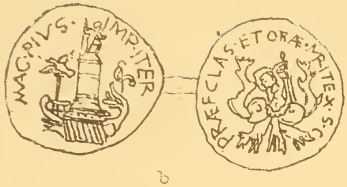


b

c

well known and important, but its importance is due to its historical interest. In the days when it was painted it was only one amongst the thousand decorations of a private house in an obscure provincial town,—a town which in modern days, from the simple fact of its unique preservation, has assumed a quite fictitious prominence. Was it likely that the design on a coin, struck to commemorate the victory of a great imperial commander, should be borrowed from a work of art whose interest was purely local? As to the when and the why of the production of this coin we are left in no doubt. On the obverse the inscription runs—"Mag: Pius imp: iter:;" on the reverse it is continued—"Præf: clas: et oræ marit: ex. S. C.;" Magnus Pius imperator iterum; præfectus classis et oræ maritimæ ex Senatus Consulto. The design on the reverse is a ship, the Pharos of Messenia surmounted by a statue of Neptune. History tells us that Sextus, *by the help of a great sea storm*, defeated the fleet of Octavian in the Bay of Messenia. What more natural than that he should depict on the coin struck to commemorate his victory, the image of the great sea-monster, the incarnation of storm and shoal and sea peril, by whose aid he had triumphed?

In striking the coin he would naturally select a familiar type, but we think he would not seek his original so far afield as Pompeii.

On the other hand, did the painter copy the coin-engraver? Scarcely; the design was too small, the system of "enlarging to life-size" had not come into vogue.

We have left out of consideration the gem, because its date is uncertain; the question has to be decided between the coin and the picture. Or, satisfied that neither is the

copy of the other, shall we seek for a third original? Such is the bold fashion of archæologists when they are driven to bay. They see the effect, and confidently claim the existence of a cause. Secure in this confidence they ransack not only artistic but literary monuments, to see if any record be left of this great original, and after much weary turning over of the pages of Pliny, perhaps when courage and perseverance are about to fail, they come upon some such notice as this:—"Nicomachus pinxit Scyllam quæ nunc est Romæ in templo Pacis." They remember that the coin and the picture, of which they seek the original, were executed by Italian artists: what more likely than that the original should be sought in Italy's capital, in Rome? One of these supposed copies is a picture; this adds probability to the hypothesis that the original was a picture too. This original must have been famous to have been so widely copied, and the picture of Nicomachus was known far and wide even before it reached Italy; this is implied in the words "quæ nunc est Romæ." A high probability is arrived at, but another witness is called in—the internal evidence of style. Archæologists know that it is on record of a pupil of Nicomachus, Aristides by name, that he excelled in the expression of "ethe et perturbationes;" did he learn this art from a master who painted the terror of Scylla and the anguish of her victims?

Something of negative reasoning has to be added. Supposing a great original, were there other Scyllas painted by other masters of fame equal to that of Nicomachus? We know of one other painted by Androkydes; it attained an unenviable reputation. The artist, gourmand as well as genius, expended much loving care on the execution of the well-fed comely fishes with which he surrounded his monster. This

Pl. 54.

artist is rejected from the circle of probability. He could not have painted our raging Scylla, nor have we any trace of the well-loved fishes. By such curious details, by the collections and comparison of such scattered material, does the archæologist gain for himself a few sparse facts. Sometimes, instead of gleaning only a half-dead inference, he gathers in a living harvest. Certain that the great original *has* existed, he conceives a hope he scarcely dares to utter, that it exists still; he seeks, and by some happy chance, some half-inspired intuition, he finds. Then indeed full fruition crowns the labour of his patient quest. His joy is like the joy of the astronomer when the planet he alone has known of darkly, but most surely, at last shines upon his sight in actual vision—like, but with an added tenderness, for to this lover of the past his long-lost new-found treasure comes to him sacred from the touches of dead human fingers.

We have dwelt at length on these three Scylla monuments, because they afford a good illustration of what we may call "the method by replicas." Again and again the archæologists are obliged to frame their sole conception of what has been by what is, to reconstruct in thought the original from copies scattered far and wide, to detect these copies through all the disguises of mutilation, and, still worse, false restoration. For this purpose late Roman work, coins, medals, gems, pictures, reliefs, statuettes, all are pressed into service; objects artistically insignificant become precious as copies, useful because always servile; such copies we cherish as the degraded descendants of a splendid ancestry.

Before we leave the Homeric story we must note one pathetic marble monument figured in Plate 54, the fragment of a statue once forming part of a group, and now in the

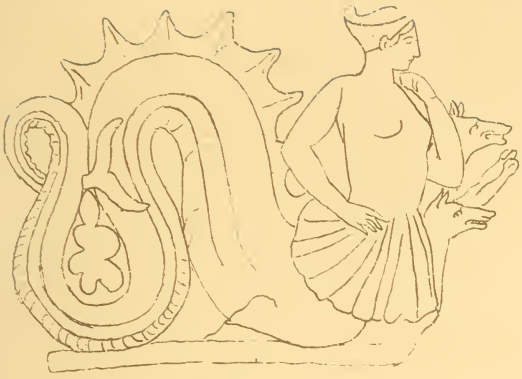
Villa Albani. Scylla herself is lost, only one comrade remains; a fierce sea-dog grips at his thigh; his head is thrown back, his left arm seems to have been raised, despair and anguish are in his face. As we look at him we remember the words of Odysseus, "The most pitiful thing was this that mine eyes beheld of all my travail that I endured in searching out the paths of the sea."[1]

It is the more to be regretted that the rest of the group is lost, because the existence of a somewhat similar fragment at Palermo makes us conjecture that both were marble replicas of a great bronze group, probably that which perished from the Hippodrome at Constantinople in A.D. 1204, when the city was taken by the Crusaders. Bronze, we can imagine, with its finer tenacity of texture, was well fitted for the highly-wrought pathos of the Scylla scene. An epigrammatist[2] has told us how, but for the glitter of metal which told of the work of Hephaistos, he should have thought Scylla herself had left the waves and come ashore, such fury seems to rage in the "breathing bronze."

After all this tumult and frenzy it is a treat to turn from the dreadful Odyssey tale, and see the goddess in a calmer aspect,—symbolising, one might fancy, the sea at rest, with all its hidden terrors lulled to peace for a while. The design in Plate 55*a* is from a terra cotta from Ægina, now in the British Museum. The style is severe, but full

[1] Niketas, *Chron.*, p. 861, 11, describes "*τὸ αρχαῖον κακον τὴν Σκύλλαν*" as part of this group.

[2] "*εἰ μὴ χαλκὸς ἔλαμπεν, ἐμάνυε δ' ἔργον ἄνακτος*
ἔμμεναι Ἡφαίστου δαιδαλέοιο τέχνας
αὐτὴν ἄν τις Σκύλλαν ὀΐσσατο τηλόθι λεύσσων
ἐστάμεν, ἐκ πόντου γαῖαν ἀμειψαμέναν·
τόσσον ἐπισσείει, τόσσον κότον ἀντία φαίνει,
οἷον ἀπὸ πελάγευς συγκλονέουσα νέας.—*Anthol. Pal.* ix. 755.



Pl. 55.

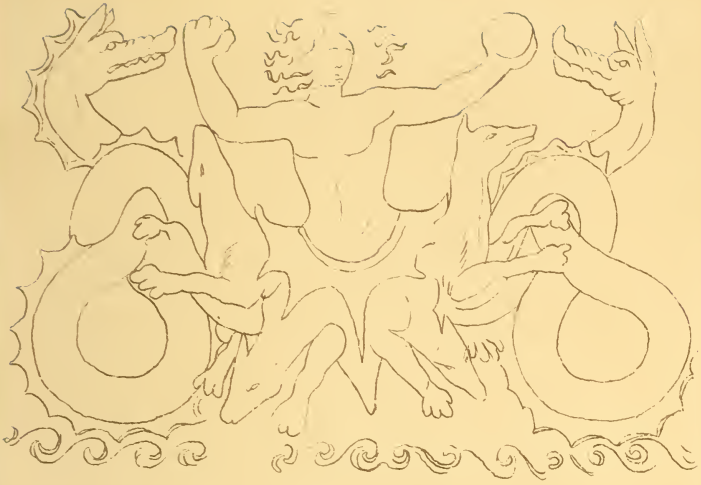
of grace. Scylla is seen in profile; the expression of face and figure are alike quiet and peaceful; a long, pliant, dolphin tail curls behind her; two dogs' heads appear in front. The goddess wears a sort of light tunic; her hair is bound by an opistho sphendone.

If possible, still more gentle is her aspect in the beautiful design figured in Plate 55*b*, a rhyton from the Jatta collection at Naples. Scylla here plays the part of Caryatid to the upper portion of the vase. In her left hand she holds a sepia; about her waist a slight drapery is folded; below two dogs, one only slightly indicated, issue. Her tail, richly ornamented with a sort of shell device, is gracefully curled. Below her is a wave-pattern, the regular conventional indication of the sea. On the other side of the rhyton a fish is figured; above her, on the neck of the vase, is a winged victory, probably with some funeral intent. Scylla designs were popular for vases of grotesque forms such as rhytons. On an askos in the British Museum we have her sculptured as a sort of lid; she is accompanied by sea-horse decorations, and as in the present vase by a winged victory, with wreath and other more decidedly funeral attributes. The rhyton we have figured belongs probably to the latter part of the best vase period; the body of the goddess is painted white; the rest of the design—*i.e.* the hair, drapery, tail, and dogs—red on black. We seem in this vase to have the final and most finished conception of Scylla: the monstrous elements are all present, but so softened, so skilfully combined, that their horror is abated; the general type has been preserved, but there is no rigid adherence to unsightly details.

The goddess, however, is not always peaceful when she

is represented alone; she needs no victims to excite her inherent ferocity. In Plate 56*a*, from an Etruscan relief, we have a fine portrayal of Scylla alone in an attitude unmistakably warlike. Her dogs and sea-dragon tails are finely disposed about her, with due regard to symmetry and balance; she lifts her hands armed with two stones, which she prepares to throw; the face is mutilated, but the wild dishevelled hair is blown about her head,—a disorder which contrasts strikingly with the neat compact arrangement of her sphendone in Plate 55*a*.

Another warlike Scylla we have in Plate 56*b*, a design from a flat-shaped water-bottle. The sea-monster seems to have been a favourite figure for presentation on this class of vessel. A very similar one to that in our Plate may be studied in the Second Vase Room of the British Museum. Scylla in both appears armed with a dagger; the object in her left hand is uncertain; it may be a second dagger, or it may be the sheath from which her right-hand dagger has been drawn; the style is rough and clumsy, the outline somewhat confused. A third warlike Scylla is seen on another water-bottle, figured in Plate 57*a*. Her shape here is very simple; instead of the complicated mingling of dogs and sea-dragons, she has simply two dolphin-tails ending in dogs' heads. She holds in her hands torches, which she seems to brandish with a threatening gesture. The signification of these torches is not quite obvious. Some allusion may be intended to the reputed parentage of Scylla, as daughter of Hecate, the familiar torch-bearer of the under world. If so, this torch-bearing Scylla forms a fitting transition to the funeral aspect of the goddess and her consequent connection with the Centaurs.



a

b

Turning to Plate 57*b*, a design from an Etruscan sarcophagus, and so necessarily of funeral import, we see Scylla between two female Centaurs. She brandishes still her accustomed oar, and two sea-serpent tails are gracefully arrayed beneath her. Each of the Centaurs holds in her hands an uncertain object, possibly a stone or log, which she is about to hurl. The she-monsters of rapine from the torrents and tempests of sea and land are met in unholy union. Such is the only definite motive of the association we can perceive. The juxtaposition of *male* Centaurs and Scylla is familiar in Latin literature, and such juxtaposition occurs always, I believe, in *late* art. When Virgil desires to depict a sensational approach to Hades, among the monsters that affright his hero,

> "Centauri in foribus stabulant Scyllæque biformes." [1]

Lucretius, some half-century before, in his image-theory coupled together these same monstrous shapes—

> "Centauros itaque et Scyllarum membra videmus
> Cerbereasque canum fauceis;" [2]

and Statius makes his hero beg that far-off valleys may hide from him

> "Centaurosque Hydræ greges Scyllæaque monstra." [3]

Any or all of these poets may well have borrowed the notion from monuments around them, or artists may have conceived the idea from these very poets. There is nothing unnatural in the placing of these monsters as guardians at the gates of Hades. Scylla was of course specially popular with the monster-loving Etruscan; she is finely represented

[1] *Æn.* vi. 286. [2] Luc. iv. 736. [3] Stat. Silv. v. 3, 280.

on two sarcophagi now in the Etruscan Gallery of the British Museum.

Before we proceed to frame, as well as may be, our final conception of Scylla, we must turn for a while to her terrible counterpart, Charybdis. It is not till after the sacred cows of Helios have been slain, and the comrades of Odysseus have perished by the wrath of the gods, that the hero, alone on his perilous raft, is drifted back by the ruinous winds within reach of the whirlpool.

"Then verily the west wind ceased to blow with a rushing storm, and swiftly withal the south wind came, bringing sorrow to my soul, that so I might measure back that space of sea, the way to deadly Charybdis. All the night was I borne, but with the rising of the sun I came to the rock of Scylla, and to dread Charybdis. Now she had sucked down her salt sea-water, when I was swung up on high to the tall fig-tree, whereto I clung like a bat, and could find no sure rest for feet, nor place to stand, for the roots spread far below, and the branches hung aloft out of reach, long and large, and overshadowed Charybdis. Steadfastly I clung till she should vomit forth keel and mast again; and late they came at my desire. At the hour when a man rises up from the assembly and goes to supper, one who judges the many quarrels of the young men that seek to him for law, at that same hour those timbers came forth to view from out Charybdis. And I let myself drop down hands and feet, and plunged clean in the midst of the waters beyond the long timbers, and sitting on these I paddled hard with my hands. But the father of gods and men suffered me no longer to behold Scylla, else I should never have escaped from utter doom."

a

b

Pl. 57.

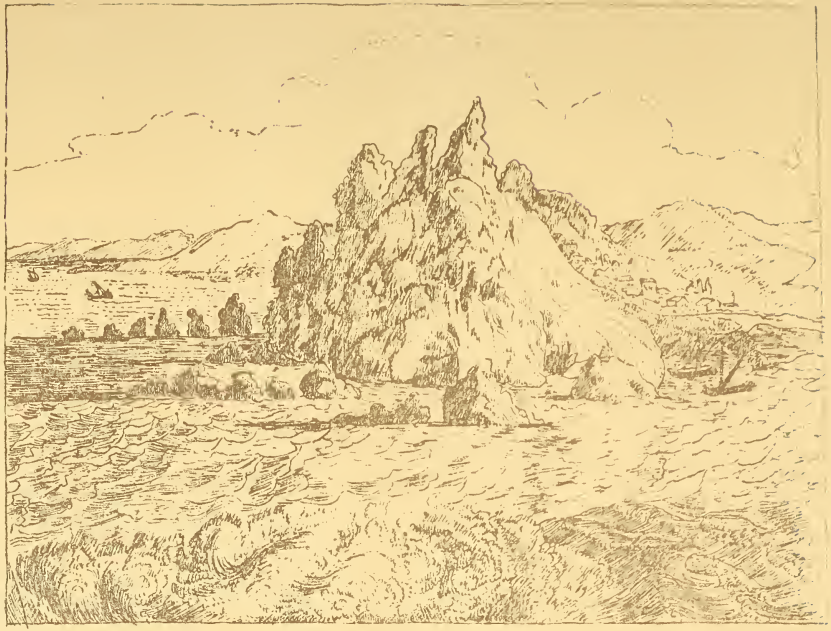
If Scylla was a trying subject for art-presentation, much more so Charybdis, the unseen goddess of the whirlpool. On no frieze or vase or gem does she meet us. But in late days, when art began to be pictorial in character, the medal-engraver bethought him that her fig-tree would make a graceful adjunct to the terrible scene of the struggle between Scylla and her victims. On a contorniat (figured in Plate 52*b*) we see this attempt at the picturesque, the only trace in art, so far as I know, of the "deadly Charybdis."

Charybdis has an Indian parallel too close and curious to be passed over. In the Somadeva tales, when Saktideva is in search of the golden city, he comes to the island of the fisher-king Satyavrata and asks for guidance. Satyavrata (the ever-faithful) gives him a ship and goes with him as guide. As they are crossing the sea, Saktideva sees ahead a dark spot, and asks, "What is that which raises itself so invitingly and fair?" It seemed like a winged mountain, now rising, now dipping down into the waves. Satyavrata answers, "It is a fig-tree beneath which men say there is a whirlpool which draws men down to their destruction." Both note with horror that their ship is drifting helplessly towards it. Satyavrata (the ever faithful) bids his comrade catch the boughs of the fig-tree and draw himself aloft, promising himself to hold the boat up till Saktideva is safe; so it falls out; the faithful fisher-king perishes, Saktideva hangs like a bat to the tree till birds with golden wings alight thereon; he is at last borne away by them to the golden city.

What the significance of this recurring fig-tree may be is hard to tell. Possibly its Greek name, ἐρινεός, may have some connection with Ἐρινύς, the might and destruction of the lower world.

We have severed Scylla and Charybdis, the tearer and the swallower, for a time; but we must link them together again in the joint locale of their terrors. No myth that we have met with is of so simple and definite an origin, so plainly the result of the personification of natural phenomena. This was early recognised. Thucydides says in his cold way, "The strait in question is the sea that is between Rhegium and Messana, where Sicily is at the least distance from the continent, and this is the so-called Charybdis, where Odysseus is said to have sailed through. It is from the narrowness and the currents caused by inrush from the Tyrrhenian Sea, that it has naturally become accounted dangerous." Modern geographers confirm the account. The conjoint influence of the moon and the coast formation of the straits produce, they say, certain tidal phenomena, which, with prosaic accuracy, they declare correspond exactly with the words of Homer—"Thrice a day she spouts the black water forth, and thrice a day she sucks it down in terrible wise." Be this as it may, there is still enough of danger about Charybdis to warrant the growth of a myth. The water is for about thirty yards agitated to the depth of from seventy to ninety fathoms, and circles in quick eddies. This to the undecked boats of the Greeks would be formidable.

Charybdis, in the course of time, seems to have changed but little: she has not lost her terrors, though the skill of sailors has lessened their fears. It is otherwise with Scylla. Her rock can scarcely now be called formidable even to the most excited imagination; but if we may trust a Dutch geographer who wrote of her in A.D. 1700, it is only the last two centuries that have seen the change. A



Pl. 58.

sketch from his painting, taken in that year, is given in Plate 58, and we add his own description :—"Scylla est un rocher de la côte de Calabre qui s'avance dans la mer vis à vis le Cap de Faro en Sicile : on l'appelle aujourdhuy Capo. Ce rocher a la figure d'une femme, il a de grands creux et de profondes cavernes, dans les quelles les vents et les eaux font des mugissements horribles. Il est trés dangereux, tous les vaisseaux qui y sont emportés par la violence du flux ou par celles des vents y périssent sans resource." Of Charybdis he gives us one somewhat contemptuous particular :—"Les matelots ne le craignent pourtant pas tant d'aujourdhuy comme on faisait autrefois ; ceux de Messine vont s'y promener avec des barques plattes, et d'après y avoir fait plusieurs tours au gré de l'eau ils se retirent à force de rames." Truly times are changed since the days when "even the Earthshaker himself could not save one from the bane." There is a middle-age story of a certain Cola Pesce who lived like a fish in the water of Charybdis, and who twice dived to the bottom of the whirlpool and brought back a beaker to King Frederic, but the third time he perished.

Though the sharp-peaked rocks of Scylla the "Render" are fallen, some lingering elements of horror haunt her still. The beach slopes steeply ; short jutting rocks, half wave-covered, have something the look of monstrous embryonic feet; the wind still howls in frequent gusts of storm; pirates too often lurk in her caves ; and still, no less than in the days of Polybius and Strabo, dolphins and sword-fish swim in abundant shoals, a prey to fishers, if not to Scylla herself. The myth, we may own for once without misgiving, has arisen from the play of a poet's fancy around the highly

wrought description brought by some traveller of the actual perils of the strait.[1]

The fisher folk of our own land are not quick to personify; but had they the apt fancy of the Greeks, they might see in many of the peaks about the Yorkshire coast the "shape of a woman," hear her dreadful howlings in the mysterious caves, and see her cruel hands outstretched to grasp the shipwrecked sailor. It was from such elements as these that the Greek imagined his Scylla; sharp rocks reared up on high, low-lying reefs, tangled currents, howling storms and waves. To this conception his genius forced him to give instant shape. Naturally that shape was the form of a sea-beast, hideous because monstrous, malignant because hideous. "En effet, dans l'absolu, être hidieux c'est haïr," says the poet of the pieuvre; and he further explains "le difforme se débat sous une nécessité d'elimination qui le rend hostile." Further, we know the Greek, in his pride of ancestry, suffered no goddess, however evil, to remain parentless. With Homer Scylla is the daughter of Krataïs, of Force. Stesichorus, in his poem "Scylla," makes her the daughter of Phorkys the sea-god; as such she enters into the Herakles saga.[2] She seizes on one of

[1] The Jesuit Narquelle, travelling among the Delaware tribes in North America, was told of a terrible place, to which his canoe was fast approaching, where a demon (an evil manitu) lurked ready to devour him and wreck his boat. The demon proved to be a high steep rock at a sudden bend of the river, against which the current ran with dangerous violence.—TYLOR, *Hist. Prim. Cult.* ii 190.

[2] "ὁ τὴν θαλάσσης Αὐσονίτιδος μύχους
στενοὺς ὀπιπτεύουσαν ἀγρίαν κύνα
κανὼν ὑπὲρ σπήλυγγος ἰχθυωμένην
ταυροσφάγον λέαιναν, ἣν αὖθις πατὴρ
σάρκας καταίθων λοφνίσιν δομήσατο."

Lycoph. Alex. 44.

the cows that Herakles is driving off; he slays her, and she is restored to life through the strange means of burning by the torches of her father. In one art monument she brandishes two torches. This may have reference to her extraordinary resurrection, or again may, as we have already noted, indicate another parentage. Eustathius [1] says she was sometimes accounted daughter of Hekate, whose attribute of the torch as goddess of the under world is well known.

Another version makes her daughter of Lamia. This Lamia may possibly at first have been a sort of personification of some frightful sea beast. Mythology says she was beloved of Zeus; Hera in jealousy robbed her of her children; henceforth the childless Lamia, mad with grief, became a hideous cannibal, seizing and eating the children of more happy mothers. As such she became the stock conventional bugbear of later superstition, in request, as we learn from both Theokritus and Strabo, to frighten naughty children, and as such she lives on about the coasts of modern Hellas. There are land Lamias and sea Lamias. The sea Lamia, or Lamna as she is called, specially haunts the coast of Elis; she raises storms and

[1] Eust. M. 1714 :—

"*τὴν δὲ Σκύλλαν Φόρκυνος θυγατέρα καὶ Ἑκάτης ὁ μῦθος λέγει, ἔχουσαν πρὸς ταῖς πλευραῖς σκύλακας κατέχουσαν τὸν περὶ Σικελίαν πορθμόν. Ὅμηρος μέντοι Κραταιὶν ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς μητέρα τῆς Σκύλλης δηλοῖ, ἐπάγων καὶ ἣ μιν τέκε πῆμα βροτοῖσιν. Εἰ δὲ καὶ Ὅμηρος Κραταιὶν λέγει αὐτήν, ἀλλ' οἱ μάγοι Ἑκάτην φασὶν αὐτὴν καλοῦσιν. . . . Στησίχορος δὲ Λάμιαν αὐτῆς μητέρα ποιεῖ . . . Νίκανδρος δέ, φασιν, ὁ Κολοφώνιος ἐν γλώσσαις ἰχθύος αὐτὴν οἶδεν ὄνομα, καθα καὶ τὴν Σκύλλαν, εἰπὼν ὅτι ὁ καρχαρίας ἰχθὺς καὶ λάμια καὶ σκύλλα καλεῖται.*"

See Horat. *de Art Poet.* 340; and Strabo, i. 19.—"*τοῖς τε παισὶ προφερομένη εἰς ἀποτροπὴν τοὺς φοβέρους μύθους· ἥ τε γὰρ Λάμια μῦθός ἐστι καὶ ἡ Γοργὼ*," etc.

whirlwinds to shipwreck sailors; she consumes the flesh of men and frightens children. If a child dies suddenly the peasants say, *τὸ παιδὶ τὸ ἔπνιξεν ἡ Λάμνα*—the Lamna has choked the child. *Λάμνα* is a current term of reproach for a greedy woman.

In these diverse forms of parentage we detect, I think, a common element, a connection with the horror of death and the under-world, well borne out by the funeral significance we have noted in the Centaur connection and on funeral vases. Scylla, in a word, is the sinister aspect of the sea, with all its malignant forces of storm and rock and sea monster,—as such, by birth and functions, in close connection with the dæmons of the lower world.

Such was the Homeric Scylla; but the men of later days were not content with a nature-myth so simple. The fierce rage of the sea-monster had for them no interest unless it were tinged with the bitterness of some more human frenzy, so about the stern daughter of Phorkys they wove the web of a love story.

Let us turn to Plate 59. The design is from a series of five pictures which decorated a room in the Villa Tor Marancio, representing five women who died for love—Canace, Pasiphae, Scylla, Myrrha, Phaedra. The name of each is clearly written above her in small Roman letters, so there is no mistake about this saddest of all companies. It is curious that this practice of writing the name meets us in very early art, timid of its own power to express; and again at a very late period of decadence, when a degenerate style needed elucidation. The picture before us is somewhat feebly executed, but the conception is full of sim-

Pl. 59.

plicity and pathos. A maiden stands with her hand upon a wall, and looks into the far distance; in her other hand she holds a large lock of hair newly cut. Her face is troubled; the fear has begun to work which will soon be despair. A terrible deed has been done, and the issue is still unknown. Scylla stands on the walls of her father's city. The beautiful King Minos is besieging it; he is great, we are told, as "the harrier of towns;" but this time he prevails not by the might of his sword, but by his beauty only,[1] for Scylla loves him. On her father's head there grows a purple lock[2] of hair, on which the safety of the city depends. She has just shorn it off; and she mounts the city walls to look at the camp of Minos[3] once more, perhaps even to bid farewell to her fair native town before she goes forth to carry to her love[4] the fateful present. We know how she was received; we hear the harsh words of the horror-stricken Minos:—

"Di te summoveant, o nostri infamia sæcli;"

and we wonder that the Pompeian could have cared to see painted upon his walls a scene so sad and shameful,—the daughter who, unasked, betrays her father. The design in Plate 60 comes from the Casa dei Dioscuri. A youth sits on an arm-chair overspread with a green drapery. Over his hips is a red chlamys; in his left hand a spear. Two

[1] "Μίνως μὲν πτολίπορθος ἑῷ ποτὲ κάλλεϊ γυμνῷ
ὑσμίνης τέλος εὗρε, καὶ οὐ νίκησε σιδήρῳ
ἀλλὰ πόθῳ καὶ ἔρωτι."—Nonn. *Dionys.* 25.

[2] This purple lock passed into a sort of proverb. Cp. Lucian *de Sacrif.* 15:—

"κἂν τοῦ Νίσου ἔχῃ πλόκαμον τὸν πορφυροῦν."

[3] "Sedibus ex altis tecti speculatur amorem."

[4] "Suasit amor facinus."

women approach him. The older of the two wears a green chiton, red chlamys, and a sort of head-dress, which probably indicates her as nurse to Scylla. She raises her hands as if in deprecation. In the foreground is a maiden in a double purple chiton. Her light hair falls loosely about her, giving a look of careless haste. She holds in her right hand the purple lock from her father's head. Minos makes a gesture of dismay. Behind two male attendants are speaking to each other.

Art has left us no monument of the sad ending, but the poets tell us how the ruthless Minos made use of Scylla's love and treachery, but, hating the traitress, bound her behind his ship[1] on the homeward voyage. And she became a sea-bird, pursued always by the cruel Minos.

The story, which belongs to the Attico-Megarian cycle, has many variations. We first meet it in the Choephoræ of Æschylus. He sternly, after the manner of Greek tragedy, excludes, so far as may be, the element of love. Scylla, he says, was bribed by a present of golden chains;[2] and he seems to have known nothing of the final transformation. We have not many mentions of it in our extant

[1] "Tum suspensa novo ritu de navibus altis
Per mare cæruleum trahitur Niseia virgo."—*Ciris*, 389.

And more circumstantially—

"καὶ τὴν κόρην τῆς πρύμνης τῶν ποδῶν
ἐκδήσας ὑποβρύχιον ἐποίησε."—Apoll. iii. 15, 8.

[2] "ἄλλαν δεῖ τιν' ἐν λόγοις στυγεῖν
φοινίαν Σκύλλαν,
ἅτ' ἐχθρῶν ὕπερ φῶτ' ἀπώλεσεν φίλον, Κρητικοῖς
χρυσεοδμήτοισιν ὅρμοις πιθήσασα δώροισι Μίνω,
Νῖσον ἀθανάτας τριχὸς νοσφίσασ' ἀπροβούλως
πνέονθ' ἁ κυνόφρων ὕπνῳ· Κιγχάνει δὲ μιν Ἑρμῆς."

Æsch. *Choeph.* 613-22.

Pl. 60.

tragedies, but we know from Ovid[1] that it must have been frequently chosen for stage representation. We feel also that it was unlikely a theme so full of situation should have been neglected by the later drama. From Ovid's time we hear no more of the golden chains; love becomes the more tragic motive. He tells the story at length in the *Metamorphoses*, and works up the presentation scene with much of the stock artificial pathos he had always so largely at command. Our Pompeian picture may have been partly inspired by his elaborate treatment. An imitator of Virgil (probably of the time and circle of Messala) wrote a long poem (Ciris) on the story of Scylla, and introduces one new element which this same picture illustrates. No one who remembers the nurse of Phædra is surprised to see Scylla accompanied by a similar confidante, but literature is silent as to her name and even existence till we come to the author of Ciris. He adds to the *dramatis personæ* an old nurse, Carme,[2] who no doubt figures in our wall-painting. He also describes the scene to which our first picture is due—Scylla standing in silent conflict on the wall; but he passes over the presentation scene so elaborated by Ovid. Possibly our painting may have been inspired by neither poem, but by some Alexandrian production lost to us.

There is, I think, little doubt that originally the two Scyllas were quite distinct. The traitress Scylla belongs, as we noted, to the Attico-Megarian cycle; the grave of her

[1] "Impia nec tragicos tetigisset Scylla cothurnos,
ni patrium crinem desecuisset amor."—Ovid. *Trist.* ii. 393.

[2] "Quam simul Ogygii Phœnicis filia Carme
surgere sensit anus," etc.—*Ciris.* 220 *seq.*

The version of the story given by the author of *Ciris* is no doubt taken from some Alexandrian original.

father stood in the time of Pausanias behind the Lykeion at Athens. The Homeric Scylla is a monster of more western seas. It is clear, however, that the ancients regarded them, at all events in Virgil's [1] time, as one and the same. Nor is the reason, I think, far to seek. When colonists from Athens and Megara sought the eastern coast of Sicily, they bore with them their joint heritage of mythic lore. Coming to the Strait of Messina, they found already reverenced there a Scylla cruel and treacherous. Greek colonists, we know, loved to assimilate to and combine with their own religions cults akin to their own. Was it surprising they should interweave with the local story already current the myth of their own most ill-starred maiden ?

If we have any misgivings as to the connection of the Minos myth, we can have none as to another less terrible but still very tragic tale. Homer tells us when he speaks of his Scylla, "A dreadful monster is she, nor would any look on her gladly, not if a god should meet her." [2] But it was not always so. If we turn to Plate 61, we shall see that a god did "meet her" once long ago, and "was glad" for a while and sorry thereafter, even the sea god Glaucus.[3]

[1] "Quid loquar, ut Scyllam Nisi quam fama secuta est
Candida succinctam latrantibus inguina monstris
Dulichias vexasse rates, et gurgite in alto
Ah ! timidos nautas canibus lacerasse marinis."
VIRG. *Ecl.* vi. 74.

[2] "... αὐτὴ δ' αὖτε πέλωρ κακόν· οὐδέ κέ τίς μιν
γηθήσειεν ἰδὼν, οὐδ' εἰ θεὸς ἀντιάσειε."—*Od.* xii. 87.

[3] I cannot forbear from here quoting what M. Renan has written as to the rise of the myth of Glaucus. My object is not the investigation of this wondrous sea-god except as the lover of Scylla, but many of M. Renan's beautiful words are equally applicable to her.

"Un de ces mythes qui me semblent les plus propres à faire comprendre

Pl. 61.

Our design is from a painting in the Villa Albani, and may have been inspired by Ovid's telling of the story. Scylla, half-draped, stands at the brink of the sea, with terror or wonder in her uplifted hands.[1] At a very short distance Glaucus swims up. He has the body of a man; his beard is thick, his hair long; behind him he uprears a beautiful dolphin's tail. He is no ignoble lover for a sea-nymph to scout. He strikes his hand passionately upon his breast, with an emphasis which would be almost comic, only we remember how, in the words of a sixteenth century poet,

> "He loved her to the very white of truth,
> But she would not concern it."

The painting is very delicately conceived, full of a

cette extrême complexité, ces aspects fuyants, ces irreconciliables contradictions des fables antiques est celui de Glaucus; mythe humble pourtant, mythe de pauvres gens mais ayant par la même mieux conservé son caractère primitif et populaire.

"Jetez pêle-mêle toutes les idées des gens de mer, amalgamez les branches éparses des rêves d'un matelot vous aurez le mythe de Glaucus; préoccupation mélancolique, songes pénibles et difformes, sensation vive de tous les phénomènes qui naissent dans les flots, inquiétude perpétuelle, le danger partout, la séduction partout, l'avenir incertain, grande impression de la fatalité. Glaucus est à la fois la couleur et le bruit de la mer, le flot qui blanchit, le reflet du ciel sur le dos des vagues, le vent du soir qui prédit la tempête du lendemain, le mouvement du plongeur, les formes rabougries de l'homme de mer, les désirs impuissants, les tristes retours de la vie solitaire, le doute, la dispute, le désespoir, le long ennui d'une certitude s'épuisant contre le sophisme et l'immortalité qui ne peut ni s'assurer ni se délivrer d'elle même.

"Quelque fois, Glaucus est Glauce . . . la couleur de la mer devient ainsi une femme, comme le sommet montonnant des vagues devient la tête blanche des Grecs qui fait peur aux matelots. Quelque fois il est Lamie qui attire les hommes, et les séduit par ces attraits; d'autres fois un épervier qui plonge en tournoyant sur sa proie, puis une Sirène insatiable tenant un jeune homme de chaque main."

[1] "Constitit hic et tuta loco, monstrumne deusne
Illa sit equorans."

certain weak daintiness. It is, so far as I know, the only actual art monument left us of the love of Glaucus. The nymph, it seems, fled affrighted, and the lover went home for a while. Little peace he had there, to judge from the picture that meets us in Plate 62*a*. Here is a sea-god (if not indeed Glaucus, some one who shared his lot) teased by two of the pestilent Loves, who in later days were so much abroad. They are mounted on dolphins, so no ocean-god can escape them; their "way is on the sea,"[1] though such light Loves as these were all unknown to Sophokles. Has "Eros unconquerable" come to this, that he must pull his victim's hair and twitch his cheek? Glaucus looks ill at ease; his eyebrows contract, and there is pain in his face. The design, from a terra cotta in the British Museum, is very late in style, but soft and full of grace and pathos. The beard of marine foliage shows a sea-god, and we know Glaucus was thus traditionally bedecked.[2] We could almost think the sixteenth century Oxford poet[3] had added to his classical training some tincture of archæology, and studied the terra cotta before us. For he tells us how poor Glaucus, his locks touselled no doubt by the Loves, deems himself unfit to appear before his lady, so he goes to the sea-goddess Thetis for help, and we hear

[1] "*φοιτᾷς δ' ὑπερπόντιος.*"—SOPH. *Antig.* 785.

[2] "*τὸ δ' εἶδος ὑγροὶ μὲν αὐτῷ γενείων βόστρυχοι, λευκοὶ δ' ἰδεῖν καθάπερ κρουνοί, βαρεῖς δὲ πλόκαμοι κομῆς, καὶ τοῖς ὤμοις ἐποχετεύοντες ὅσον ἐσπάσαντο θαλάττης· ὀφρῦς δὲ λάσιαι καὶ ξυνάπτουσαι πρὸς ἀλλήλας οἷον μία. . . .*

"*φεῦ τῶν στέρνων, ὡς λάχνη μὲν αὐτοῖς ἐγκατέσπαρται, βρύοις κομῶσα καὶ φυκίοις, γαστὴρ δ' ὑπόκειται.*"—*Philos. Imag.* ii. 15.

[3] See "Scillaes Metamorphoses interlaced with the unfortunate love of Glaucus, by Thomas Lodge of Lincolnes Inne, Gentleman." Thomas Lodge was an Oxford scholar, but he strangely intermingles his classic lore with Christian mythology.

b

"A hundred swelling tides my mother spent
Upon these locks, and all hir nymphs were prest
To plait them faire when to her boure I went."

His pains were all in vain, the nymph dismisses him, and with scant courtesy—

"Pack hence, thou fondling of the western seas,"

is all her answer to his fond entreaty. But he does not despair; it is still the lover who thus bemoans himself:—

"Scilla hath eyes, but two sweete eyes hath Scilla;
Scilla hath hands, faire hands, but coy in touching;
Scilla hath wit, surpassing grave Sibylla.

Scilla hath words, but words well stored with grutching;
Scilla a saint in looke, no saint in scorning;
Looke saint-like, Scilla, lest I die with mourning."

Another and earlier poet of classic days tells us how Glaucus bethought him of a wiser plan than idle lamentation. He remembered that some nymphs of sea as well as land, loving a gift, will cease to scout the giver, so next time he sought her cave it was with no empty hands. One day he brought to melt his cruel love some unfledged halcyon nestlings, and, most costly gift of all, a shell[1] from the far-off Erythrean Sea. Such a shell we see in Plate 62*b*. It was found on no western sea-coast. We do not know if

[1] A specimen of this shell, known to naturalists as the *Tridacna squamosa*, nowlies in the Second Vase Room of the British Museum. On the inside a design is incised; round the edges on either side a monster crouching. The faces are Assyrian, in profile. The apex is carved in the form of a mask. The shell was found at Canino in Etruria. A similar shell, now in the Second Egyptian Room, was found at Bethlehem. Fragments have also been found at Nimrud. The *Tridacna squamosa*, not found in the Mediterranean, probably found its way to Greek and Etruscan towns through Phœnician traders. Cf. Herod. i. 1. See *Guide to Vase Rooms*. Part I.

the sea-god had swum far away into the strange Eastern Ocean to fetch his gift, or if he had bartered for it with some Phœnician trader. He had no doubt learned that few maidens could resist this dainty toy. It was his last hope, and as he came to the cave he looked so sad and downcast that a kind girl Siren[1] pitied him as he passed her, shedding salt tears. We are glad to meet a Siren again filling so gentle a function; but her pity availed nothing, and in his despair the foolish Glaucus betook himself to Circe to seek for help from her magic. Through the words either of Ovid or Keats, the rest of the dreadful story is familiar to us all; how Circe, when she saw Glaucus, loved him, and, hating Scylla, some say slew her, some say turned her into an evil sea beast. Our Oxford poet tells us how

> "Hir locks
> Are changed with wonder into hideous sands,
> And hard as flint became her snow-white hands;
> The waters howl with fatal tunes about her:
> The aire doth scowle; when as she turns within them,
> The winds and waves with puffes and billows scout her.

And he parts from his wave-beat "Scilla," with this quaint sixteenth-century "envoy," bidding all ladies know

> "That Nimphs must yield when faithfull lovers straie not,
> Lest thro' contempt almightie love compell you
> With Scilla in the rocks to make ye biding,
> A cursed plague for women's proud backsliding."

---

[1] In a poem by a lady called Heidyle, cited by *Athenæos*, vii. 296, we have the following lines:—

> "ἢ κόγχου δώρημα φέροντ' Ἐρυθρᾶς ἀπὸ πέτρης,
> ἢ τοὺς Ἀλκυόνων παῖδας ἔτ' ἀπτερύγους,
> τῇ νύμφῃ δυσπείστῳ ἀθύρματα. Δάκρυ δ' ἐκείνου
> καὶ Σειρὴν γείτων παρθένος οἰκτίσατο."

But Odysseus meanwhile is clinging to a plank, rowing hard with his hands," and for nine days is he borne along; on the tenth the gods bring him nigh to the Isle of Ogygia, where dwells lovely Calypso of the braided tresses. Here, seated on the rocky sea-shore, we may leave our hero at last.

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